JUST THE FACTS: SUMMER READING LIST - PAGE 21

School Reform News

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PAUL VALLAS

Chicago Schools CEO Vallas Resigns

Mayor frustrated with disappointing reading scores

BY GEORGE A. CLOWES

In surprise moves just a few weeks after the release of disappointing student test scores, Gery Chico and Paul Vallas, the two-man reform team largely responsible for nationally touted improvements in the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) over the past six years, abruptly resigned, Chico in late May and Vallas in early June.

Vallas' resignation was preceded by a notable lack of support from Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley, who frequently has expressed frustration with the slow pace of student reading improvement in the city's schools.

Board President Chico had indicated in April that some significant administrative changes would be forthcoming to address the Mayor's concerns about the lack of progress in elementary reading scores. The first news of those changes came on May 21, when CPS officials announced central office staff would be cut by 16 percent, eliminating some 400 non-teaching jobs, to provide $22 million to hire hundreds of new teachers in the fall.

Four days later, Chico resigned, saying he was leaving voluntarily to spend more time with his three daughters and his law practice.

"Six years is actually a lengthy period of service in this position," said Chico, noting that only three prior board presidents had served longer than he had.

VALLAS continued on page 4

Parents Save SF Charter School

Linda Gausman, parent of a third grader and a member of the leadership team for Parents to Save Edison Charter Academy, speaks to over 200 parents, children, and community supporters on the steps of the San Francisco Board of Education. *Photo/H. Mobley*

But victory comes at a high price for Edison Schools

BY ALAN BONSTEEL

Culminating months of effort, hundreds of largely low-income, minority parents whose children attend San Francisco's Edison Charter Academy were successful in persuading a majority of the city's board of education to keep the school under the management of Edison Schools, Inc. rather than forcing it back under the authority of the San Francisco Unified School District.

On June 28, the San Francisco Board of Education voted 4-2 to transfer sponsorship of the elementary school from the district to the California State Board of Education, whose president is charter school advocate Reed Hastings.

Despite the jubilation that greeted the vote, the victory came at a high price. The school board imposed increased costs on Edison, froze the charter school in its current first-through-fifth-grade configuration, and barred the establishment of further

EDISON continued on page 6

WI Democrats Vote to Slash Voucher Funding

Education of thousands of children would be disrupted this fall

BY GEORGE A. CLOWES

"So this is what the Democrats do when they're in charge: They try to kill a program visibly benefiting thousands of needy schoolchildren in Milwaukee."

"Madison's Choice Killers"
June 14, 2001 editorial
Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

In a move that has angered and dismayed parents with children in voucher schools and sent school choice advocates scrambling, Democrats in the Wisconsin State Senate have voted to cut funding of the 10-year-old Milwaukee voucher program by half and to limit further participation in the program.

An earlier proposal to cut the funding was defeated in committee. At their annual convention in June, Wisconsin Democrats adopted an uncontested resolution condemning school choice programs.

If funding of the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program were reduced by half, more than 5,000 students could be looking for new schools in the fall because of voucher school closings, Milwaukee school choice leader Howard Fuller told State Senate Majority Leader Chuck Chvala, who proposed the program cuts. In the 2000-2001 school year, 9,638 students from low-income families used publicly funded vouchers worth up to $5,326 to pay for tuition at private schools in Milwaukee.

MILWAUKEE continued on page 8

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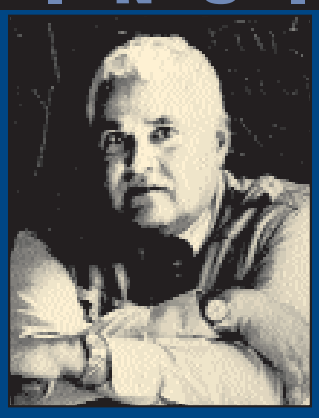

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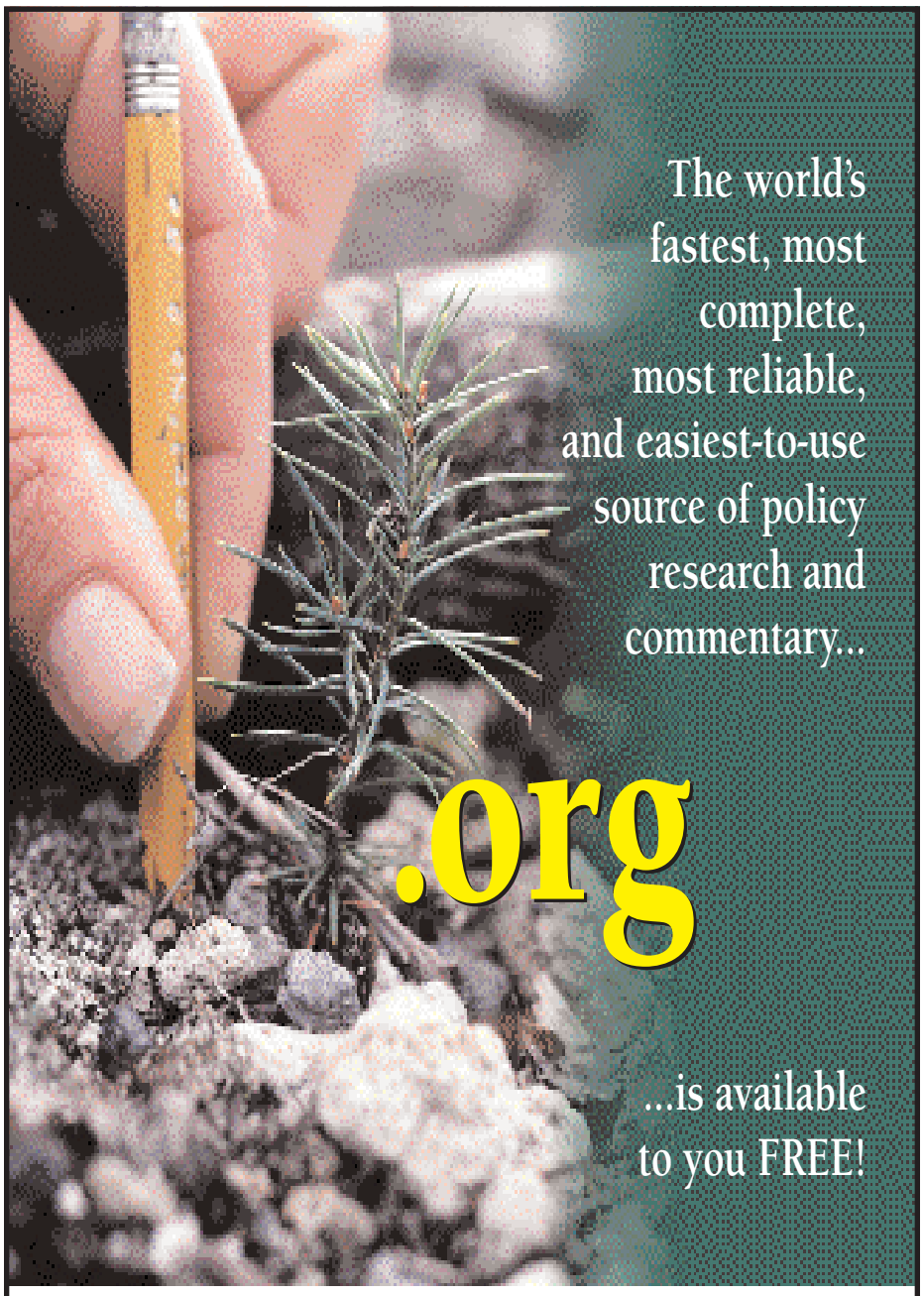

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Americans Like Public Schools . . . and Vouchers

Book provides key insights for both choice supporters and opponents

BY GEORGE A. CLOWES

Are the American people sending a definitive message on school choice by consistently rejecting voucher initiatives at the ballot box?

The teacher unions claim they are, using the voters' rejection of vouchers as part of their own self-interested opposition to any new parental choice proposal. But the results of an extensive, nationally representative public opinion survey show Americans are, in fact, quite open to the idea of vouchers.

In a survey conducted by Stanford University political science professor Terry M. Moe, 60 percent of respondents registered their support for vouchers, and only 32 percent registered opposition. The strongest support came from families who could make use of vouchers to get their children out of low-quality schools.

The results of the survey are reported in Moe's new book, *Schools, Vouchers, and the American Public* (Brookings Institution Press, 2001), a title that recalls his ground-breaking 1990 book with John E. Chubb, *Politics, Markets, and America's Schools*.

The earlier book promoted a vision of public education built on parental choice and competition among schools. Moe's new book reviews progress toward that goal and carefully examines public opinion data to assess the likelihood of achieving further progress with different political coalitions and strategies.

"Decades from now, vouchers will come to be an integral part of American education," Moe predicts.

Then why are voucher initiatives failing now? That has to do with how poorly informed people are, explains Moe.

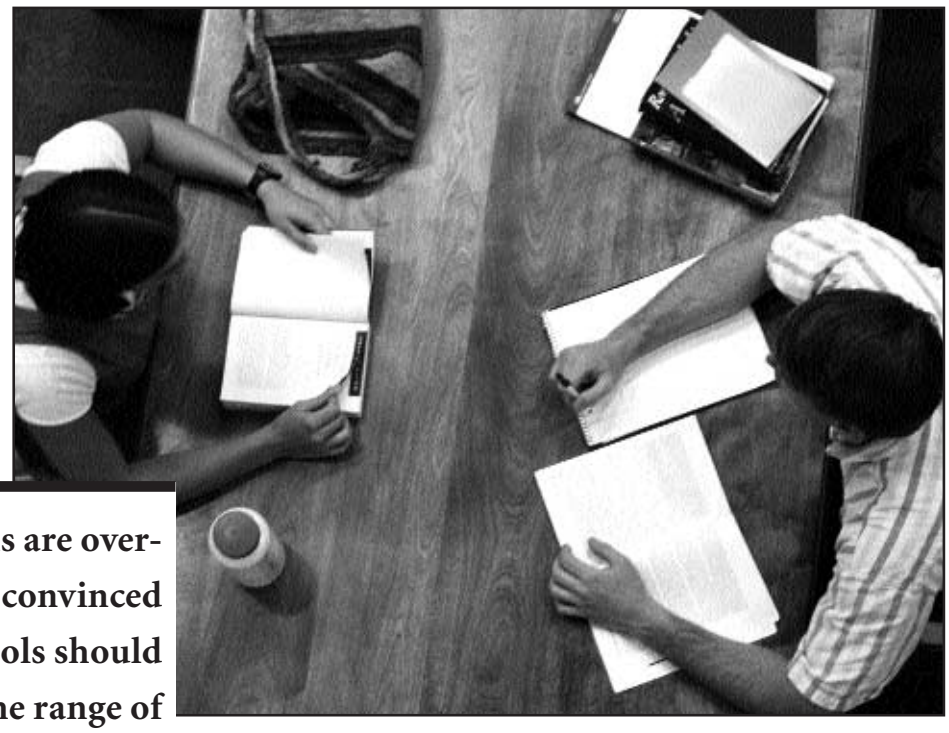
Even though voucher supporters are in the majority, they aren't well-informed about choice or its possible consequences. At the same time, Americans generally believe that having a public education system is a good thing; they think the schools are doing a reasonably good job; and they don't want to do anything that might harm the functioning of the public school system. So if concerns are raised about the negative effects vouchers might have on the public schools, voters stick with the status quo and vote "No" on vouchers.

"On the opposition side, you don't have to convince people that you're right," Moe explained to a Brookings Institution audience. "What you have to do is convince people that there is doubt [about vouchers], that there is uncertainty, that there is risk." And given the general population's comfort with the public education status quo, "this is a piece of cake."

The lesson, concludes Moe, is that ballot-box initiatives are not the kinds of battles school choice advocates can win. The way to succeed, he contends, is through the legislative process: the way policy is normally made and changed in the U.S. The voucher victories that have been achieved to date—Milwaukee, Cleveland, and Florida—all have been achieved by that route.

They Like Public, Prefer Private

Despite their support for public schools, Americans tend to think private schools are better. A majority of public school parents (52 percent) would be interested in sending their child to a private school if money were not a problem. These parents don't seek out private schools for racist, elitist, or religious reasons, notes Moe, but because they want to place their children in better-performing schools.



". . . Americans are overwhelmingly convinced religious schools should be included in the range of schools where vouchers could be redeemed."

If a voucher system were to be adopted, Moe found Americans are overwhelmingly convinced religious schools should be included in the range of schools where vouchers could be redeemed.

They also believe everyone should get a voucher. However, because they want to make sure vouchers don't harm the public schools, Americans aren't willing to make the transition to universal vouchers in one big leap. Their preference is to move incrementally toward that goal, first giving vouchers to those who need them the most, such as children from low-income families in the inner city.

One of Moe's findings is sure to alarm many voucher advocates: Americans are overwhelmingly in favor of imposing a set of basic regulations on voucher schools to hold them accountable for "quality and proper management."

"[T]hey believe, by a big margin, that private schools should not be able to set their own admissions criteria," said Moe. "They would have to admit everybody. And they want to force religious schools to admit students of every religion. . . . Voucher leaders might not like it, but that's what people want."

Vouchers and the Civil Rights Movement

Civil rights leaders who oppose vouchers might not like what Moe sees happening in the future, either. Today, the anti-voucher views of established civil rights groups like the NAACP are at odds with the pro-voucher views of their constituents. As a result, new groups like the Black Alliance for Educational Options, led by a new generation of young black leaders, are springing up to represent those constituents.

"Now the NAACP is engaged in an attempt to convince its own constituents that they are wrong in their perceptions of their own interests. That is not going to work," said Moe, predicting that first the civil rights groups, and then the Democrats, will shift over to support vouchers.

"I think Democrats ultimately will have to resolve this tension with their own constituents by actually representing them," he added.

Although changes in public opinion move "glacially," Moe says charter schools and privately funded vouchers are getting people used to the idea of having choice as an accepted part of the education system. The continuing success of private scholarship programs for low-income families is not only winning over the participants and their families, but also changing the attitudes of their friends, neighbors, and extended families towards choice.

CORRECTION **In the June issue of *School Reform News*, the introduction to the interview with Siegfried E. Engelmann gave an incorrect number of schools using Direct Instruction (DI). DI is used in about 10,000 schools nationwide in some capacity, such as in resource rooms or in isolated classrooms. It is used on a comprehensive basis— i.e., on a schoolwide basis—in about 300 schools. *School Reform News* regrets the error.**

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How to Continue the Improvement?

Mayor Richard M. Daley says he wants Chicago to have "the best school system possible"… but how can his new leadership team build on the efforts of Gery Chico and Paul Vallas to improve the city's schools?

One place the mayor's new team might look for answers is in Houston, where Secretary of Education Roderick Paige was superintendent before joining the Bush administration earlier this year.

In 1994, Paige introduced a reading program that requires every elementary school teacher to be trained in reading instruction and every student to be tested on reading proficiency before being promoted to the next grade. The district offers extensive summer and weekend classes to enhance inadequate reading skills. The aim is to have children reading on target by the end of first grade.

"[H]ow can [Daley's] new leadership team build on the efforts of Gery Chico and Paul Vallas to improve the city's schools?"

Paige's program has been successful, according to a recent report from the Council of Great City Schools, called *Beating the Odds*. The report cited Houston as one of a small group of cities where the improvement in reading scores on state tests outpaced statewide improvements in all grades tested.

One highly successful reading instruction method is the Direct Instruction (DI) approach invented by Siegfried Engelmann. A demonstration of that method was launched years ago in five Chicago schools, but then was dropped because—contrary to DI's requirements—other reading instruction programs were implemented in the system's literacy programs and in the city's after-school and summer reading programs. According to Engelmann, DI officials were not given the control over program implementation that the contract called for.

Mayor Daley's new team also could follow the example that New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani set earlier this year and take Chicago school officials on a visit to Milwaukee. In May, seven members of the New York City school board heard Milwaukee Mayor John O. Norquist, parents, and educators praise the voucher system and describe how it has improved the Milwaukee Public Schools by forcing them to compete for students and for tax dollars. The New York group met with Milwaukee schools superintendent Spence Korte, who regards choice as a spur that prompts public schools to improve.

Results from Chicago's Other Schools

Catholic Schools

Students at the 264 elementary schools run by the Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago scored as much as 25 percentile points above the national norm on the TerraNova standardized achievement test, according to results released by the Archdiocese in June. For students across the Archdiocese, combined test scores for reading, language, and math were at the 68th percentile for third-graders, at the 70th percentile for fifth- graders, and at the 75th percentile for seventh-graders.

"All of our students, regardless of their background and economic circumstances, have done well," said Sister Judith Cauley, C.S.J., interim superintendent of the Archdiocese's schools. "The scores confirm that the longer a student remains in the Archdiocese of Chicago system, the greater are his or her achievement results."

Charter Schools

Test scores released in June show that seven of nine Chicago charter schools increased the percentage of third- to eighth-graders reading at or above national norms. Results in mathematics, however, were mixed.

Although the overall improvements were the best posted since 1998, only three charter schools had more than half of their students performing at grade level in mathematics or in reading.

VALLAS continued from page 1

Daley praised Chico, saying he had done "a tremendous job," but then was notably cool when asked about Vallas' future. In a memorable headline on May 30, the *Chicago Sun-Times* reported, "Daley Fires Spitball at School Chief." This came after the mayor had said Vallas "can stay if he wants to," while emphasizing that no one is "irreplaceable" and that there are "a lot" of people who could replace him.

Vallas Tires of "These Games"

Two weeks after Chico's resignation, Vallas also quit, saying a meeting with Daley had made it clear his future was not with the Chicago Public Schools. Later, however, both Daley and Vallas insisted that Vallas alone had made the decision.

"I don't want to play these games for another year," Vallas told the editors of the *Chicago Tribune*, saying he needed a break. "It's time to go."

Following the resignations, Daley said both Chico and Vallas had done "a remarkable job" and that "[Vallas] has been quite simply the best chief executive in the history of the Chicago Public Schools."

Chico called Vallas' exit "a loss to the city" and gave the former city budget director much of the credit for improving the city's schools. After Vallas took over in 1995, he quickly brought the budget and operations of the system under control. Subsequently, he built dozens of new schools, ended social promotion, greatly expanded after-school and summer-school programs, and gained nationwide attention for the improvements he achieved.

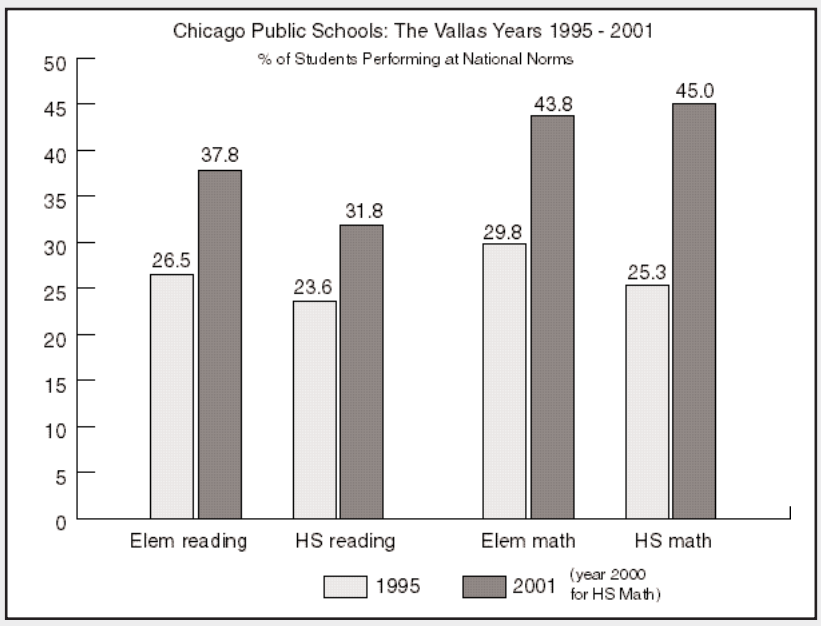
"This system is much better off than before Gery Chico and I got here," said Vallas. "The schools are in great financial shape, and the children are rising to the challenge."

"No Magic Bullet," Replacements Warn

Daley moved quickly to name replacements. On June 28, Chico was replaced by Michael Scott, 51, a government affairs executive for AT&T Broadband and previously president of the Chicago Park District. Vallas was replaced by Arne Duncan, 36, his deputy chief of staff since 1999.

"There is no magic bullet, no one solution to these problems," said Scott when he was named Chico's replacement. Then, giving himself some breathing room, he added, "I do know that any effort, large or small, will not have an immediate impact."

Unlike Scott, a veteran of three mayoral administrations, Duncan has had little experience to prepare him to take over a $3.5 billion system with over 435,000 students, 45,900 employees, and some 600 schools. Before becoming Vallas' deputy, Duncan was director of magnet schools for the Board of Education and director of the Ariel Education Initiative, a nonprofit group that promotes education in poor neighborhoods. He comes from a family of educators and is a former Harvard basketball star.



"I am optimistic that the public schools can offer every child a good education," Duncan said. "I want to be an advocate for every child and provide every child with a good education."

Daley praised Duncan as someone who can "work with people and groups with different views to find the common ground that puts our children first." Then, downplaying the issue that had led to his frustration with Vallas, he said, "Test scores may not improve as much as we would like."

The Record Under Vallas

Since 1995, when Vallas took over, Chicago's summer school enrollment has swelled from 30,000 to 200,000, and after-school enrollment has jumped from 100,000 to 250,000. From 1995 to 2001, the percent of students performing at national norms rose from 26.5 to 37.8 in elementary reading, from 29.8 to 43.8 in elementary math, from 23.6 to 31.8 in high school reading, and from 25.3 to 45.0 in 2000 for high school math.

When Vallas took over, about one in four students in Chicago could read at grade level. Now one in three can read at grade level, but progress has stagnated.

In May, Iowa Test results showed that 37.8 percent of students in third- to eighth-grade in the city's schools could read at or above national norms, up from 36.2 percent in 2000. But reading scores for third-graders were down, even though summer school programs were instituted in 1999 specifically to boost the test scores of under-achieving first- and second-graders. Reading scores for high school students also were down

Last September, a report from the University of Chicago's Consortium on Chicago School Research raised questions about the effectiveness of ending social promotion. Although socially promoted third- and sixth-graders did as well as or better than retained students, the study showed that one-third of retained eighth-grade students dropped out—about the same as before the bar on social promotion. In March, a Consortium report showed that nearly half of the system's students (43 percent) still drop out before graduating from high school.

Last November, 80 percent of participating city schools failed state tests, with overall results showing little improvement over 1999 scores.

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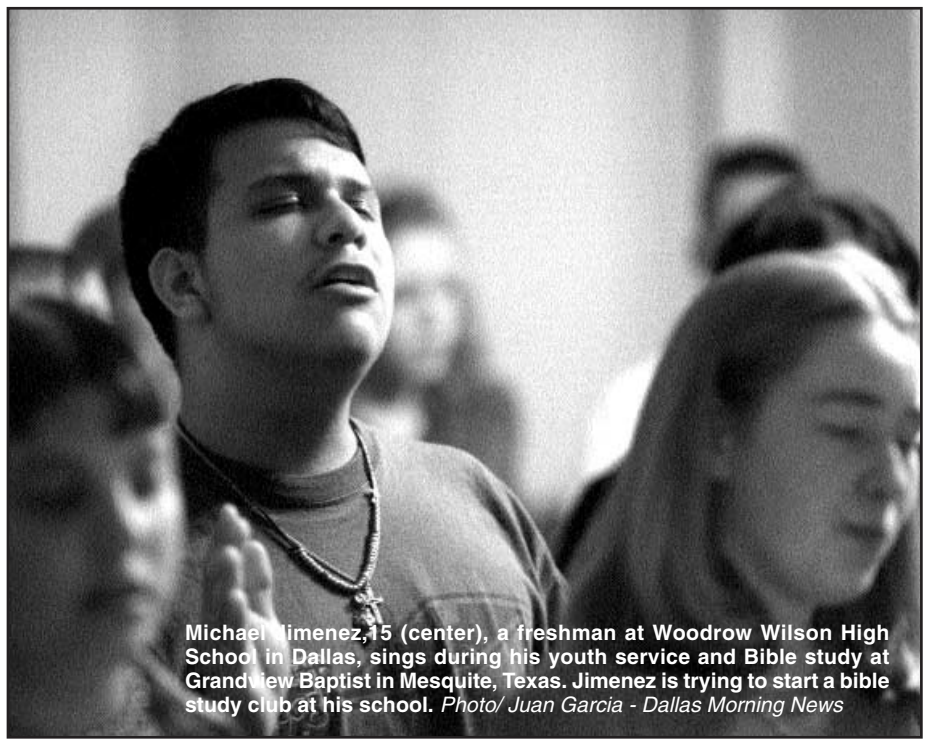

Michael Jimenez,15 (center), a freshman at Woodrow Wilson High School in Dallas, sings during his youth service and Bible study at Grandview Baptist in Mesquite, Texas. Jimenez is trying to start a bible study club at his school. *Photo/ Juan Garcia - Dallas Morning News*

Supreme Court OKs Bible Club Meetings in Schools

Excluding religious groups is "viewpoint discrimination"

BY GEORGE A. CLOWES

On June 11, the U.S. Supreme Court ordered in a 6-3 decision that school districts must give children's Bible clubs the same access to public schools for after-school meetings they provide to other community groups. The case involved the Milford, New York school district, which allowed nonreligious groups to use its facilities when school was over but denied access to the Good News Club, a Christian organization for young people aged 6 to 12.

Writing for the majority, Justice Clarence Thomas concluded the restriction "violates the club's free-speech rights."

Milford school officials argued that the club's activities—developing "moral values by using Bible stories, games, scripture, and songs in a fun setting"—were "the equivalent of religious worship" and that allowing the club to meet on school premises would be viewed as a school endorsement of Christianity over other religions, a violation of the First Amendment's establishment clause.

The club sued, saying the school was discriminating against its viewpoint since the school allowed the Boy Scouts and other groups to give moral instruction in after-school club meetings.

The Court agreed. "[W]e find it quite clear that Milford engaged in viewpoint discrimination when it excluded the club from the after-school forum," wrote Justice Thomas, who added that "no Establishment Clause concern justifies that violation."

"The Court's decision is a reminder that religious speech is not second-class speech," commented University of Notre Dame law professor Richard W. Garnett in the *Wall Street Journal*. He noted the decision also provides further support for the constitutionality of school voucher programs.

"[T]he court's current case law makes it clear that the First Amendment permits religious schools and faith-based service providers to participate in our shared efforts for educational opportunity and empowerment and against poverty and addiction," wrote Garnett.

Thomas was joined in the decision not only by conservative Justices Anthony Kennedy, Sandra Day O'Connor, William Rehnquist, and Antonin Scalia, but also by the more liberal Justice Stephen Breyer in partial support. Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg, David Souter, and John Paul Stevens dissented.

In reaching its decision, the Court did not break new ground but applied its rulings from two recent cases, *Lamb's Chapel (1993)* and *Rosenberger (1995)*. In the *Lamb's Chapel* case, a school district was found to have violated the Constitution when it barred a private group from using its facilities to present family values from a religious perspective. In *Rosenberger*, the University of Virginia was found to have violated the Constitution when it denied funding to a student organization because its publication offered a Christian viewpoint.

In the present case, Milford's policy permitted any group to use its facilities to "promote the moral and character development of children," and yet barred groups that promoted this development from a religious perspective. This was impermissible "viewpoint discrimination," the Court concluded.

"[S]peech discussing otherwise permissible subjects cannot be excluded from a limited public forum on the ground that the subject is discussed from a religious viewpoint," wrote Thomas.

Milford claimed children would think the school had endorsed the club and feel "coercive pressure to participate" because the activities took place on school grounds. However, the Court found this argument "unpersuasive," noting excluding the club could be perceived as "a hostility towards the religious viewpoint." The important issue with regard to the Establishment Clause is that government programs should be neutral towards religion.

In *Rosenberger*, the Court found that the "guarantee of neutrality is respected, not offended, when the government, following neutral criteria and evenhanded policies, extends benefits to recipients whose ideologies and viewpoints, including religious ones, are broad and diverse." In the present case, the Good News Club "seeks nothing more than to be treated neutrally and given access to speak about the same topics as are other groups."

For more information…

WWW The U.S. Supreme Court's June 11, 2001 decision in the case of *Good News Club v. Milford Central School* is available from the Supreme Court Collection at the Web site of Cornell University's Legal Information Institute at **http://supct.law.cornell.edu/supct**.

Milford Still Aims to Exclude Good News Club

Although the U.S. Supreme Court ruled on June 11 that the Milford Central School district cannot exclude religious groups like the Good News Club from using its facilities for after-school activities, that doesn't mean religious groups will be meeting at the school any time soon.

According to Fox News, the district met the court decision with a proposal to consider new rules that either would bar *all* groups from using school facilities after hours, or would not permit use of school facilities until 5 or 6 p.m., which would be too late for the Good News Club meetings.

Other Court Action on School Choice

Ohio Attorney General Betty Montgomery in May asked the U.S. Supreme Court to review a 2-1 decision of the Sixth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals finding the Cleveland school voucher program unconstitutional. The state Supreme Court had come to the opposite conclusion three years ago.

To assist in the appeal, Montgomery in June hired former Whitewater prosecutor Kenneth Starr, who was previously involved with the defense of the Milwaukee voucher program.

In an unexpected development on June 22, United States Solicitor General Theodore Olson filed a brief in the U.S. Supreme Court urging it to review the Appeals Court decision. The United States rarely files briefs urging court review of cases to which it is not a party.

The Supreme Court has declined review of other school choice decisions, but supporters believe the Bush administration's action will boost their chances of Supreme Court review.

"The administration is putting action behind its verbal support for school choice," said Clint Bolick, litigation director at the Washington, DC-based Institute for Justice, which has defended the Cleveland program and other school choice programs on behalf of parents and children.

More Victories in Illinois

On June 29, the Illinois Supreme Court refused to reconsider a ruling of the Fourth District Court of Appeals, which had upheld the constitutionality of the Illinois educational expenses tax credit law.

The law was under attack from the Illinois Education Association and its allies, who argued it violated four provisions of the Illinois Constitution, two of which deal with establishment of religion. Each of the courts to hear the case, however, has emphatically rejected those arguments.

"This is the sixth consecutive court to have upheld the constitutionality of this form of school choice," said Chip Mellor, president of the Institute for Justice, which has been defending the tax credit law in court. "Today's Illinois Supreme Court decision should bring an end to the constitutional battle over the tax credit law and help parents get the best possible education for their children regardless of whether the school of their choice is public, private, or parochial."

Earlier in June, the Illinois Supreme Court also refused to hear a similar challenge to the tax credit law filed by the Illinois Federation of Teachers, who also challenged the constitutionality of the tax credit law. Since the plaintiffs did not raise First Amendment claims in either of the two cases, no appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court is possible.

Possible Conflict of Interest in Florida

After the Florida Supreme Court in April declined to review an Appeals Court decision upholding the state's use of public funds for student tuition in private schools, the case reverted to Leon County Circuit Court Judge L. Ralph Smith for consideration of the remaining issues.

However, the Institute for Justice, which is defending the voucher program, learned Smith's son had married the daughter of a high-ranking official of the Florida Education Association, which is one of the plaintiffs. The Institute filed a motion for Smith to recuse himself, but the Judge denied the recusal petition. His refusal has been appealed to the Court of Appeals.

Before Smith struck down the Opportunity Scholarship Program, the Institute for Justice had filed a recusal motion upon discovering that Smith's son and the union official's daughter were engaged. The Institute was forced to withdraw that motion when the teacher union submitted affidavits saying the daughter was not engaged to Smith's son. Now those affidavits appear to have been false.

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Edison Reports Extraordinary Gains

On June 28—the same day the local school board voted not to revoke the Edison charter school in San Francisco—Edison Schools, Inc. announced extraordinary gains on recent standardized tests at a number of its schools across the nation.

Significantly, the schools involved serve students who traditionally have not succeeded. Nearly 97 percent of the students in the schools are minority, and over 70 percent are eligible for the federal free or reduced price lunch program.

Detroit Edison Public School Academy, an urban school serving students in K-8, increased its percent satisfactory on the Michigan high-stakes assessment, MEAP, to 71.4 in fourth-grade math and 90.4 in fourth-grade reading, gains of 44 and 57 percent respectively. Washington-Edison Elementary School in Battle Creek showed gains of 17 and 41 percent in fourth-grade math and reading respectively. These gains are especially striking since the state as a whole has not seen average fourth-grade scores increase at all over the past three years.

Montebello-Edison Elementary School in Baltimore, Maryland was taken over by the state of Maryland several years ago because of poor academic performance; it was contracted to Edison in fall 2000. Montebello posted some of the highest scores, as well as score gains, in the entire city. First-grade students posted median scores at the 93rd percentile in reading and at the 92nd percentile in math on the nationally normed CTBS, representing gains of 51 and 67 percent respectively. Substantial gains were made in every grade.

Edison's New Covenant Charter School in Albany, New York—a school nearly closed by the state before Edison took over management—posted the fifth-highest gains of all elementary schools in Albany County on New York's high-stakes grade four English Language Arts exam, improving the school's passing rate by 17 percent.

"The accomplishments of these schools indicate that the comprehensive program that Edison has been fine-tuning over the last six years in schools throughout America is living up to its full potential," said John Chubb, Edison's chief education officer. "With these huge gains in such a range of places, we believe we have a plan that can provide world-class results anywhere."

Edison Schools currently manages 113 public schools with a total enrollment of approximately 57,000 students.

On June 5, Edison Charter Schools supporters marched from the San Francisco Civic Center to the steps of the San Francisco Board of Education with the message "Our children, our choice." *Photo/H. Mobley*

Deal Forced on Edison, Despite Meritless Charges

The San Francisco School Board's charges against the Edison Charter Academy are completely without merit, according to a report from the San Francisco-based Pacific Research Institute, released a week before the board's vote on the disposition of the school's charter.

Despite this, the school board used the threat of charter revocation to force the Edison company into accepting an unattractive deal, said the PRI report's author, Policy Fellow Diallo Dphrepaulezz.

Edison was freed from district control and allowed to apply to the state for a five-year renewal of its charter, but the agreement also imposed the following conditions on the company:

- no addition of grade levels beyond the current 1-5 at Edison Charter Academy;
- no additional Edison schools would be approved through the district;
- surrender of over $300,000 in Consent Decree funds;
- no support of any future parent or teacher petitions.

"The board's latest move has changed the local school choice debate forever," said Dphrepaulezz. "The traditional cast that has for years decried the plight of underachieving minorities now finds itself at odds with those same groups, particularly African-Americans and Latinos."

In his report, *The Fight to Save the Edison Charter in San Francisco*, Dphrepaulezz examines the charges against Edison and finds them all without merit, including the charges that the school "counsels out" minority and special education students. He shows that students at the Edison charter school achieved dramatic improvements in test scores. From 1999 to 2000, only two of San Francisco Unified School District's 73 elementary schools showed better test score improvements than the Edison charter.

For more information…

WWW Diallo Dphrepaulezz's 24-page report, *The Fight to Save the Edison Charter in San Francisco*, published on June 22, 2001, is available from the Pacific Research Institute Web site at **www.pacificresearch.org/issues/edu/ed-home.html.**

EDISON continued from page 1

charter schools through the district. (See sidebar, "Deal Forced on Edison, Despite Meritless Charges.")

Arguing with Success

This was not a case of a local school board deliberating on what to do about an underperforming school. On the contrary, the Edison charter school clearly had succeeded where the public school district repeatedly had failed. Off-the-cuff comments by school board members made it clear they expected Edison's soaring test scores to continue to rise and to prompt questions about why schools operated by the district could not produce similar improvements.

The school board's attempt to close down a highly successful school became a *cause célèbre* which drew interest locally, nationally, and even internationally in Britain's *The Economist*.

Under school district management, the school—coincidentally named Edison—was one of San Francisco's worst, with test scores among the lowest in the state. It was a dangerous and poorly maintained place where toilets didn't work and students got beat up in the halls. It underwent two reconstitutions—where all staff members were replaced—but both were flops.

In June 1998, the school was reborn as a charter school under the management of the New York-based, for-profit firm of Edison Schools, Inc. Teacher salaries were raised and order was established. Test scores rose and parents began to seek out the school. Enrollment soared.

But last November's election produced a majority of school board members who opposed any use of the profit motive in public education. They declared their intent to revoke Edison's charter.

"I don't see any way I would support this charter because I'm philosophically opposed to for-profit management," board president Jill Wynns told the *San Jose Mercury News*.

Trumped-Up Charges

But the board had a problem. California's education code permits a district to revoke a charter only if the charter school has failed to meet the "pupil outcomes" specified in the charter. Under Edison's management, the percentage of third-graders reading at or above grade level had risen from 8 to 26 percent.

In March, the board found a way to trump the facts. It voted to give notice of their intent to revoke the Edison charter based on charges of racism, discrimination, threats to teachers, and incomplete financial reporting.

At the next meeting of the school board, hundreds of parents and children—mostly Hispanic and African-American—showed up to demonstrate their support for the school, warning the board of the damage that closing the school would do to their children. Many of the parents testified to the board in Spanish, the only language they knew, causing some Edison opponents to say that "those people who don't even speak English" had been "brainwashed" into thinking their children were getting a better education. This left many observers shaking their heads in disbelief at the board's charges of racism.

> **"The school board's attempt to close down a highly successful school became a *cause célèbre* which drew interest locally, nationally, and even internationally in Britain's *The Economist*."**

Parents Persist . . . and Win

The board tried to ignore the expressions of support. Wynns made a show of contemptuously reading the newspaper during some of the testimony by parents, despite having won her office with a campaign promise to listen to the public. Subsequent school board meetings were scheduled in rarely used auditoriums, and meeting times were changed at the last minute—actions that seemed designed to discourage participation by parents.

But hundreds showed up at meeting after meeting, kept informed by an Internet and phone tree network set up by San Francisco education reformer Gary Larson of Parents to Save the Edison Charter.

The parents' persistence, plus the unfavorable national and international news coverage, eventually got through to the board. On June 21, a defensive Wynns was quoted in the San Francisco *Chronicle* as saying, "We could revoke the contract, shut down the school, and send the kids other places. But we're not that cruel and thoughtless, even though people say we are."

The enthusiastic support of parents in San Francisco for an Edison-managed public school stands in sharp contrast to the tepid reaction of parents in New York City to the same idea earlier this year. School choice in the Bay City is a concrete reality for parents; in the Big Apple, it's still an abstraction.

Alan Bonsteel, M.D. is president of California Parents for Educational Choice, and the co-author, with Carlos Bonilla, Ph.D., of A Choice for Our Children: Curing the Crisis in America's Schoools *(Institute for Contemporary Studies, Oakland, 1997). His email address is AlanChantal@aol.com.*

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Congress Approves K-12 Education Savings Accounts

The late Senator Paul Coverdell

Modest provision acknowledges that "parents know best"

BY ROBERT HOLLAND

Senator Paul Coverdell, the education-conscious gentleman from Georgia, had to be smiling down on the proceedings when President George W. Bush signed the tax-relief bill into law on June 7.

Tucked away in that bill, like a fresh slice of peach in a creamy cobbler, was a delicious victory for the principle that parents should be able to direct their money to the kind of schooling they—not the government—choose for their children.

Lawmakers in Washington, DC have generally looked favorably on providing tax breaks for child care and for paying costly tuition at public or private colleges, including religiously affiliated ones. But protectors of monopoly interests in K-12 schooling had always batted down every attempt to ease the burden on parents of elementary and secondary schoolchildren.

Until now.

Bush's tax reform expands tax-advantaged Education Savings Accounts to cover not just the expenses of higher education, but also those associated with public, private, or home schooling of children in kindergarten through grade 12. Moreover, the new law increases the annual limit on contributions to an ESA—sometimes called an education IRA—from $500 to $2,000.

The build-up of interest within such accounts is tax-free, and neither principal nor interest will be taxable upon withdrawal if parents use the money for legitimate educational expenses, such as tuition, tutoring, books, or computer hardware or software. For individual taxpayers, the contribution level phases out for annual incomes between $95,000 and $110,000; for married couples, the benefit fades for incomes between $190,000 and $220,000.

Big Education's lobbyists had rolled out their heavy artillery to gun down the extremely modest voucher in Bush's "No Child Left Behind" legislation. Even a voluntary voucher pilot project advocated by Senator Judd Gregg (R-New Hampshire) was killed by a 58-41 vote in the Senate. But the Education Savings Account attracted little fire as a very small morsel in a very large general tax package.

"Bush's tax reform expands tax-advantaged Education Savings Accounts to cover not just the expenses of higher education, but also those associated with public, private, or home schooling of children in kindergarten through grade 12."

The tactics of the Bush White House had something to do with safe passage for the ESAs, and the support of such senators as Robert Torricelli (D-New Jersey), Tim Hutchinson (R-Arkansas), and Trent Lott (R-Mississippi) also was important. But over the long haul, Senator Coverdell, who died as a result of a stroke in June 2000, fought the protracted battles that laid the groundwork for eventual passage.

"Against impossible odds," recalled Joe McTighe, executive director of the Council for American Private Education, "[Coverdell] waged a successful series of battles—fighting filibusters, managing floor debates, masterminding strategies, and negotiating agreements—to get an ESA bill approved in the Senate several times since 1997." He never gave up hope, and he constantly urged other supporters of parental choice to hang tough.

In 1997, a Senate majority supported the Coverdell ESAs, but they got pulled out of the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997 because President Bill Clinton threatened to veto the entire tax package if they remained. In 1998, the Senate passed ESAs . . . and Clinton exercised his veto on the grounds that letting families direct their own money would "undermine" government schools. The Joint Committee on Taxation had estimated that patrons of *public* schools would use 75 percent of ESA proceeds.

A Substantial Financial Resource

An 11th-hour snafu delayed the senators' plans to name the new program "Coverdell Education Savings Accounts" in honor of its champion. But the name change is expected to pass routinely later in the session.

While claiming on the one hand that ESAs drain money somehow belonging to the government schools, critics contend on the other hand that the benefits are meager and only rich people could afford to buy into the program. Coverdell patiently explained in 1999 how the miracle of compound interest demolishes such arguments:

Were a parent to start in a child's first year and place $2,000 each year—about the cost of a daily burger, fries, and soda—into an ESA yielding 7.5 percent a year, there would be $14,488 available by the first grade, $36,847 by the time the child started middle school, and $46,732 when the child reached high school. Moreover, a family in which each parent earned $35,000 a year could reduce its tax obligation by some $5,000 by the time the child turned 14.

In addition, as enacted, the Coverdell ESA permits corporations, charities, relatives, and friends to donate money to a child's tax-sheltered account. That provision could prove to be a major stimulus to the growth of private scholarships for needy children. Such philanthropy is spreading across the country through the efforts of such business-led groups as Children First America.

Bolstering Choice

The advent of K-12 ESAs does not preclude the use of vouchers, or direct grants, to assist parents in transferring their children out of unsatisfactory schools. Indeed, by honoring the principle that parents can best choose where and how to educate their children, the new tax law could foster many school choice initiatives at the local, state, and federal levels.

Even in the House and Senate education bills, where vouchers took a battering, there was a small victory for portability—the concept that a government subsidy should follow a child out of a failing school to a better educational opportunity. The closely divided Congress was not ready to buy into vouchers, but it did approve letting poor families stuck in chronically failing Title I schools use a portion of their subsidy to purchase private tutorial services.

"From education savings accounts to private tutoring to public and charter school choice, we've made some important breakthroughs in recent weeks on the road to parental empowerment," said Rep. John Boehner (R-Ohio), chairman of the House Education and the Workforce Committee.

While advocates impatient for universal school choice may deride ESAs and tutoring portability as baby steps, every parent knows that the child who took a few tentative steps yesterday is running family-room obstacle courses today.

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MILWAUKEE continued from page 1

"Significant Challenges" for Public School System

Concerned with the prospect of suddenly having to absorb and educate a large number of students, Milwaukee Public Schools board member Kenneth Johnson requested a staff report detailing how MPS would respond to the worst-case scenario of educating an additional 10,000 students. The report indicated such a scenario could give MPS a $47.5 million budget deficit next year. Superintendent Spence Korte said absorbing that number of students "would cause significant challenges."

"I don't think anyone denies that if MPS had to absorb even 2,000, much less 5,000, 6,000, or 10,000 kids next year, we would be in disastrous shape for space, money, and class size reduction," school board member John Gardner told the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*.

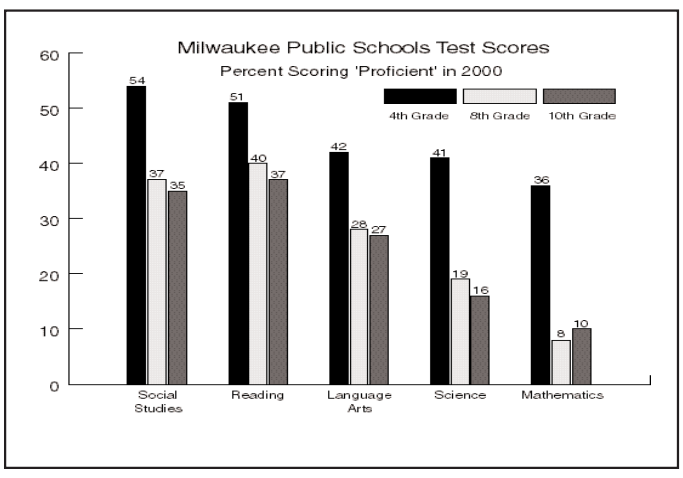
How Much Should the Voucher Be?

Arguments for reducing the amount of the voucher currently revolve around the fact that choice schools receive more money for a voucher student than a regular student pays in tuition. That's because tuition often is held below actual costs to enhance affordability; private schools make up the gap with donations and subsidies. By contrast, the voucher amount for a particular school is determined by the lower of $5,326 or the private school's operating and debt service cost per student.

Critics argue the schools should get only the amount of the tuition, since it is that amount—not the total operating and debt service cost—that benefits parents. Supporters of the higher voucher amount note private schools are unlikely to secure the required additional funds in other ways, since the burden of subsidies is a major reason for the closing of many parochial schools around the nation in recent years. (See "Catholic Schools Losing Ground," *School Reform News*, April 2001).

The Democrat attack on school choice began in May, when State Senator Russ Decker (D-Schofield) proposed slashing the amount of the Milwaukee voucher within two years to $1,000 for elementary students and $1,500 for high school students. With these lower voucher values, parents would be allowed to supplement the vouchers with their own money.

Decker's stated preference was to end the program completely, but he did not think such a bill would pass. In fact, even his "compromise" proposal did not pass the Joint Finance Committee, which rejected the plan by an 11-5 vote.



Senate Proposes to Halve Voucher Payments

In early June, choice supporters—including former MPS superintendent Fuller, Milwaukee Mayor John O. Norquist, Archbishop Rembert G. Weakland, and three MPS board members—sent a letter to legislators urging them to consider "the irrefutable evidence that school choice produces positive results at a very affordable cost."

Democrats responded with another bomb on June 13, when they launched Chvala's proposal to halve voucher payments. Parent Carmellett McVicker was one of the stunned choice parents.

"I don't know what the motive is behind [the Democrats' action]," McVicker told the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, "but it couldn't be one with the children in mind."

GOP Governor Scott McCallum questioned why anyone in the legislature would get in the way of parents and teachers trying to get a better education for their children.

Some Democrats also questioned the wisdom of the Senate's action. Rep. Antonio Riley, a strong choice advocate from Milwaukee, suggested it could lead to "a lot of disaffection with the Democratic Party."

The Senate Democrats' plan included the following provisions:

- limit state aid for choice students to $2,776 in 2001-02;
- cap the number of choice students at 10,580;
- require choice schools to adopt non-discrimination policies and to give their students the state third-grade reading test.

Fuller and other choice advocates have called for an independent evaluation of the choice program through the state's Legislative Audit Bureau, including the application of state standardized tests but not the release of individual school results.

Assembly Responds with Plan to Increase Choice

Three days after Democrats approved their plan in the Senate, the Republican-controlled Assembly on June 22 approved a plan to *increase* school choice options for parents in Milwaukee. Although an attempt to create voucher programs in Madison, Racine, Kenosha, and Beloit was defeated, the Assembly plan included the following measures for expanding the Milwaukee program:

- lift the 15 percent cap and allow an unlimited number of children to participate;
- raise the family income limit to no more than 185 percent of the poverty level from the current 175 percent;
- once in the program, families could not be dropped later if their incomes went above the limit;
- private schools throughout Milwaukee County could accept voucher students, not just private schools in the city.

Senate and Assembly proposals will be reconciled in conference in July.

Charter School Facilities & Finance

The two biggest problems in charter school development have been identified as facilities and finance. With this column, School Reform News *aims to bring its readers the newest ideas on solving these problems.*

Preparing the Financial Package for Potential Lenders

BY MARK HOWARD

When the charter school is ready to look for financing, the first item required is a financing package, used by lenders as a tool to evaluate their potential loan.

The financing package is made up of several sections, including the story of your charter school, financing history or projections, security or collateral for the loan, equity or the capital required to make the loan, conditions of the local market for charter schools, and the role of the charter authority.

The Story of Your School

Every charter school is formed for a specific purpose. Existing charter schools have the ability to show their history of service to the community and the students of that community. Newly formed or potential charter schools are required to identify the specific education mission of their school and the programs to be employed in fulfilling that mission. Lenders are interested in these stories since they form the basis of the relationship between the lender and the school.

The makeup of the board of directors also makes an important contribution to the school's story. The board should consist of parents, educators, influential representatives of the community at large, and business professionals—an attorney, an accountant, and local business owners. If these business professionals are not available, consideration should be given to outsourcing these responsibilities to one of the growing number of education management organizations, preferably one already operating in your area.

Financing History or Projections

Existing charter schools will have a two- or three-year record of enrollment that can be used to forecast future earnings of the school. This history will show the trends and stability of the school, which will assist the lender in assessing the risk in making a loan.

For new charter schools, which in most instances will be looking for funds to convert or renovate existing buildings, projections of enrollment, income, and operating expenses will be analyzed along with the existing market for education in the area.

Security or Collateral

In any business loan, the lender is most interested in preservation of capital. Consequently, the lender will look for items that can be used as security for the loan. The real estate, which would include the land and the building, is one of these items. The lender also would look to the furniture, fixtures, and equipment purchased by the school as additional collateral.

The security of the loan also is enhanced by guarantees from individual board members, the charter sponsor, the state, or some other government agency. Such enhancements provide the lender with a greater level of comfort regarding repayment of the loan and may result in a lower interest rate on the loan. In some instances, the lender might ask to receive payments directly from the sponsor or the state.

Equity and Capital Requirements

As well as security or collateral, the lender also may require that the school make a cash contribution toward the cost of developing or renovating the school site. This not only reduces the size of the loan but also demonstrates the faith of the founders in their education vision.

For existing schools, evidence of retained earnings and the use of these earnings as a reserve fund for future loan payments helps lower the interest rate on the loan and improves the lender's inclination to make the loan.

Local Market Conditions and Role of Charter Authority

Local political support for charter schools is important to the lending institution reviewing a loan package. For example, lenders would consider loans less risky in states where there are numerous charter schools. Other factors that affect the willingness of lenders to make a loan are the current trend in charter school enrollment; the relationship between local public schools and charter schools; the identity of the sponsor/authorizer; and the planned role of local educational management organizations in the project.

Mark Howard has specialized in the development of commercial properties since 1980. He owns and operates M.H. Realty Associates, Inc. in Tamarac, Florida. Readers with questions on facilities and finances are encouraged to contact him directly at mgfl@aol.com. The most frequent questions about common problems will be included in future columns.

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Troubles Not Over for Texas Teacher Union

Plans to cut costs, reduce staff, and merge meet resistance

BY MIKE ANTONUCCI

In June, the Texas State Teachers Association (TSTA), affiliated with the National Education Association, announced exploratory efforts to merge with the Texas Federation of Teachers (TFT), affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers.

The merger negotiations are part of an effort by TSTA to reverse its sagging financial and membership fortunes. However, TSTA's plans are meeting resistance from the other teacher union and from its own staff union.

Earlier this year, the Education Intelligence Agency reported that TSTA would be facing a $1 million budget deficit for next year, and that NEA had extended the union a $3 million loan, payable over the next 10 years. In response to these budget troubles, TSTA officials developed a restructuring plan. In an internal memo to local leaders, TSTA President Ignacio Salinas Jr. and Executive Director E.C. Walker explained, "After years of spending more than we were collecting in dues, it was obvious that we could not survive if we did not change our ways."

How did TSTA reach this precipice? Dues and membership numbers.

Membership Plummets

Subsidized by NEA, TSTA reduced state dues for new members to $99 (later, $149) in an effort to build numbers. They were successful in signing up members at a loss, but are having grave difficulties holding on to them at the regular rate of $329. TSTA's membership is currently 58,500, and that's only if you include its 14,000 life members, whose dues have already been paid and so bring in no new money.

TSTA's spring membership drive apparently has produced fewer than 300 new members statewide. All told, TSTA's membership is down 1,500 from last year, and would be worse if not for a 700-member increase in Austin, where TSTA and TFT locals merged in 1999.

With TFT's statewide membership at 34,000, even the combined membership of TFT and TSTA would not approach that of the independent Association of Texas Professional Educators, a non-union education association that last year celebrated passing the 100,000 member mark. A fourth organization, the independent Texas Classroom Teachers Association, also has more than 40,000 members.

Rank-and-File Oppose Merger

At TFT's annual convention in late June, the union's leadership proposed a resolution to authorize them to pursue the merger agreement with TSTA. The resolution was approved, but not before it was amended by delegates to specify 14 prerequisites for any state merger agreement, including a guarantee that at least two-thirds of the membership of the new organization affiliate with the AFL-CIO. The list appears designed to stop the merger before it even begins.

TSTA's difficulties don't end there. Included in the union's plan to balance the budget is a shutdown of all satellite offices around the state, relocation of all staff members to Austin, and a staff reduction of up to 20 percent. Many staffers will now find themselves on the road three to four nights per week. In addition, staff pay hikes are highly unlikely and TSTA is expecting the staff to accept cuts in their fully paid health insurance benefits.

Union Staff Vote to Sanction Affiliate

Employees of teachers' unions are themselves members of unions, and the umbrella group for all the staff unions of NEA state affiliates is the National Staff Organization (NSO). At a national meeting of these state staff unions in late June, the assembled delegates passed New Business Item 05-01, which mandates that "The NSO take sanctions against the Texas State Teachers Association."

The sanctions were deliberately left unspecified, but whatever endeavors TSTA plans next, it can expect little or no staff support from other NEA state affiliates.

Mike Antonucci is director of the Education Intelligence Agency, an organization that conducts public education research, analysis, and investigations. His weekly Communique´ is available at ***http://members.aol.com/educintel/eia*** *or from EducIntel@aol.com.*

Big Hike Approved for GI Bill Vouchers

No opposition to school choice at college level

BY GEORGE A. CLOWES

In stark contrast to the rigid rejection that even very modest K-12 voucher proposals have met from Democratic lawmakers on Capitol Hill, the U.S. House of Representatives on June 19 voted unanimously—416-0—to approve a huge increase in a popular college-level voucher program: the G.I. Bill. This 57-year-old program is one of 11 federal voucher programs that encounter little or no opposition from Democrats.

The House vote increased federal educational benefits to veterans by 70 percent—from $23,400 to $39,600—at a cost of $9 billion over 10 years.

Illinois Congressman Lane Evans wanted an even larger increase: $24 billion over 10 years. Evans joined most other Democrats in rejecting two amendments that would have restored K-12 school choice to President George W. Bush's school reform package, H.R. 1. One amendment was defeated 155-273, the other 186-241.

School Vouchers Work

It was on June 22, 1944 that President Franklin Roosevelt signed into law the largest and most successful voucher program in history: the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, otherwise known as the G.I. Bill. It opened the door of higher education to millions of Americans who otherwise would never have received a college degree, it reduced discrimination, and it spurred the growth of the post-war peace-time economy.

The G.I. Bill allowed returning veterans to use publicly funded vouchers to pay for education and training at the institution of their choice, religious or secular, public or private.

While the intent of the bill was to provide education and other benefits to 19 million returning veterans, its effect over the next decade was to revolutionize American society in a variety of ways. For example, colleges that had awarded degrees to 160,000 graduates in 1940 suddenly were faced with a huge expansion, teaching 2,328,000 students in 1947 as 2 million returning G.I.s chose to pursue higher education.

Whereas college in pre-war days had been regarded as just for "teachers' kids or preachers' kids," the G.I. Bill opened higher education to all—including those who previously had been discriminated against. Quotas restricting admission of Jews and Catholics disappeared as schools were swamped with veterans. Previously all-white colleges admitted African-Americans. In fact, one-third of veterans at college between 1946 and 1950 were black; many went on to become leaders in the civil rights movement.

"The pursuit of higher education became considered normal for everyone, whether they were white or black; Jewish, Catholic, or Protestant; male or female," notes Stephanie Swanson in a recent study of the effects of the G.I. Bill in *The Concord Review*.

Swanson points out the G.I. Bill also was instrumental in expanding the middle class in America beyond its previous predominance by white Protestants, making it accessible to people of other racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds. As the number of blue-collar workers decreased by 4 million after WWII, the number of white-collar workers increased by 10 million. The result of the G.I. Bill was "the American Dream come true," said political historian Milton Greenburg.

Nearly 1 in 5 Union Members Are School Workers

Education industry more heavily unionized than manufacturing or construction

Workers in elementary and secondary schools in 2000 accounted for the largest share of union members of any sector in the U.S. economy—over 19 percent—according to Heritage Foundation calculations from the Census Bureau's March 2000 Current Population Survey.

Although the transportation and public utilities sector frequently is regarded as the most heavily unionized, only 24 percent of its workers are union members. The most heavily unionized sector is K-12 schools, where 42 percent of workers carry union cards.

By comparison, just 18 percent of workers in the construction industry are union members, less than 15 percent in manufacturing, and only 9 percent of all private wage and salary workers.

The numbers on teacher union membership are even more startling when viewed by occupation: 67 percent of special education teachers are union members, 59 percent of secondary school teachers, and over 46 percent of elementary school teachers. This group of teachers accounts for over 12 percent of all union members—the highest for any single occupation.

Workers in service occupations make up 13 percent of all union members; workers in all professional specialty occupations account for 19 percent; operators, fabricators, and laborers make up 20 percent; and precision production, craft, and repair occupations account for 22 percent.

Source: "Teachers That Are Union Members: The Numbers Are Startling," by Heritage Foundation education analysts, May 18, 2001.

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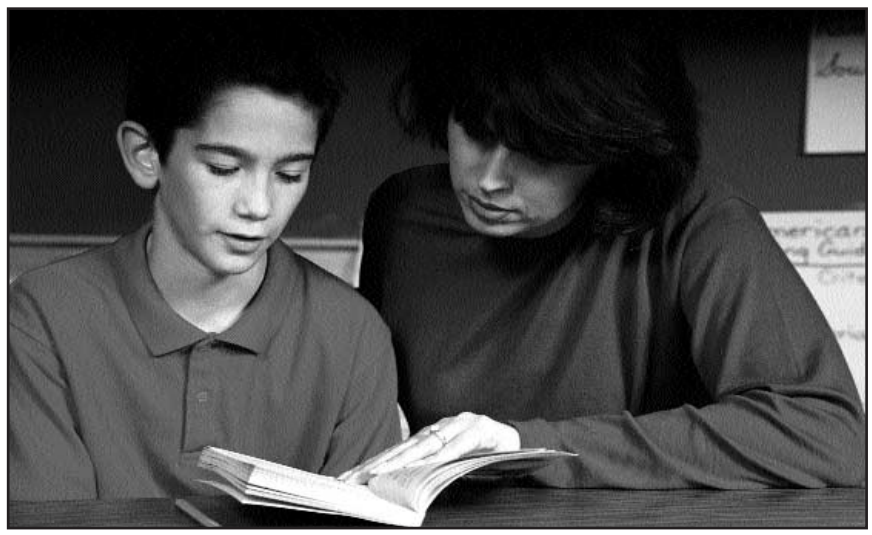

Bilingual Education Update

BY DON SOIFER

By a wide margin (384-45), the U.S. House of Representatives approved sweeping changes to federal bilingual education programs as part of H.R. 1, the legislative vehicle for President George W. Bush's "No Child Left Behind" education plan.

Whether these reforms ultimately become law will depend upon negotiations made in conference between House and Senate legislators. That's because the Senate bill makes one important funding change but essentially maintains the status quo at a much higher spending level, the result of an amendment introduced by Senator Blanche Lincoln (D-Arkansas).

"The [House] plan gives the local school districts the ability to make decisions as to how they are going to teach English as rapidly as possible," observed Rep. Michael Castle (R-Delaware), chairman of the House Subcommittee on Education Reform. But he pointed out the plan also demanded accountability, so that if districts found their approaches were not working, "they are going to have to go on to the next experiment."

"By a wide margin (384-45), the U.S. House of Representatives approved sweeping changes to federal bilingual education programs . . ."

The following are the major bilingual reforms that passed the House of Representatives, which also approved a significant funding increase for programs for English learners, but under a new funding formula:

States Choose Best Approach
States would choose the approach best suited to the needs of their English learners. Currently, three-fourths of federal bilingual funds are reserved for non-English, native language instruction. Although the House of Representatives has passed legislation eliminating this requirement in each of the past two sessions, it still remains the law. Both House and Senate bills eliminate this restriction.

The House plan would provide funding in the form of formula grants to states to allocate as they see fit, while the Senate plan would retain the current competitive-grant process.

Representative Jeff Flake (R-Arizona), who sponsored the original version of this measure, said school districts and parents know the bilingual education programs "simply aren't working," but the federal bias favoring these programs "forces school districts . . . to engage in programs that they simply wouldn't do otherwise."

State Performance Objectives
States receiving the formula grants would develop their own performance objectives for improving English fluency but also would have to demonstrate "adequate yearly progress" in transitioning English learners to proficiency in English. English learners would have to be tested in English after three consecutive years in U.S. schools.

Parental Consent
Parental consent for placement in bilingual education would be required. The House reforms would require school officials to make a "reasonable and substantial" effort to obtain the consent of parents before placing children in bilingual classrooms.

It has been well documented in Congressional hearings that many children are routinely placed in bilingual education programs without their parents' permission under the status quo.

Dollars to the Classroom
The House plan mandates that 95 percent of available funds be used by recipients to provide assistance to English learners. The remaining 5 percent could be applied towards a wide range of allowable uses, including professional development and travel by teachers and administrators to the annual National Conference of Bilingual Educators. Administrative costs would be limited to 2 percent.

Don Soifer is executive vice president of the Lexington Institute in Arlington, Virginia. His email address is soifer@lexingtoninstitute.org.

Commission Hears Bilingual Education Advocates

The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights examined bilingual education programs at a Washington, DC hearing in April, but largely heard testimony from leading advocates of bilingual education, such as Stanford University Professor of Education Kenji Hakuta and David Ramirez, director of the Center for Language Minority Education and Research.

"The research is quite clear that, all things being equal, there are advantages of bilingual education over English-only instruction," said Hakuta, presenting his own research findings. He reported it takes students between four and seven years to learn English, depending on factors such as socioeconomic status, the age at which they enter U.S. schools, and the level of education they obtained prior to U.S. immigration. He also testified about the importance of maintaining a consistent educational approach for English learners.

Responding to Hakuta's testimony, Commissioner Abigail Thernstrom pointed out that English learners in California had made significant improvements when they were moved out of bilingual education and into mainstream English classrooms following that state's 1998 passage of Proposition 227. Second-grade English learners improved their standardized test scores by 9 percentile points in reading and 14 percentile points in math in the two years immediately following the new California law.

Commissioner Russell Redenbaugh also was critical of the panel's leanings on bilingual education.

"The Commission's refusal to acknowledge the need for reform is a step backwards, to the detriment of the country's 4 million English learners," said Redenbaugh. "Certainly, a lack of English proficiency is an enormous tax on one's future income potential."

Reynolds Nominated to Head DOE's OCR

In a step with important implications for bilingual education, President George W. Bush in June announced the nomination of Gerald Reynolds as director of the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.

Reynolds was formerly president and legal counsel for the Center for New Black Leadership, a group opposed to affirmative action. The nomination immediately was criticized by a number of liberal advocacy groups, including People for the American Way and the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund.

The Office for Civil Rights has come under heavy criticism in recent years for its aggressive role in encouraging school districts to adopt bilingual education, rather than presenting an official neutral stand on the issue. A February 2001 study by the General Accounting Office found that nearly one in five school districts that had worked with OCR reported attempts to influence them towards bilingual education. In the office's Region 11, headquartered in San Francisco and home to 41 percent of the nation's English learners, 35 percent of school districts reported experiencing OCR bias towards bilingual education.

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School Choice and the New Philanthropy

Philanthropy serves as a defining mark of each era. The captains of industry from the Industrial Revolution, for instance, left behind huge endowments for the arts, greatly expanded colleges and universities, and created foundations to pursue the furtherance of almost every human endeavor.

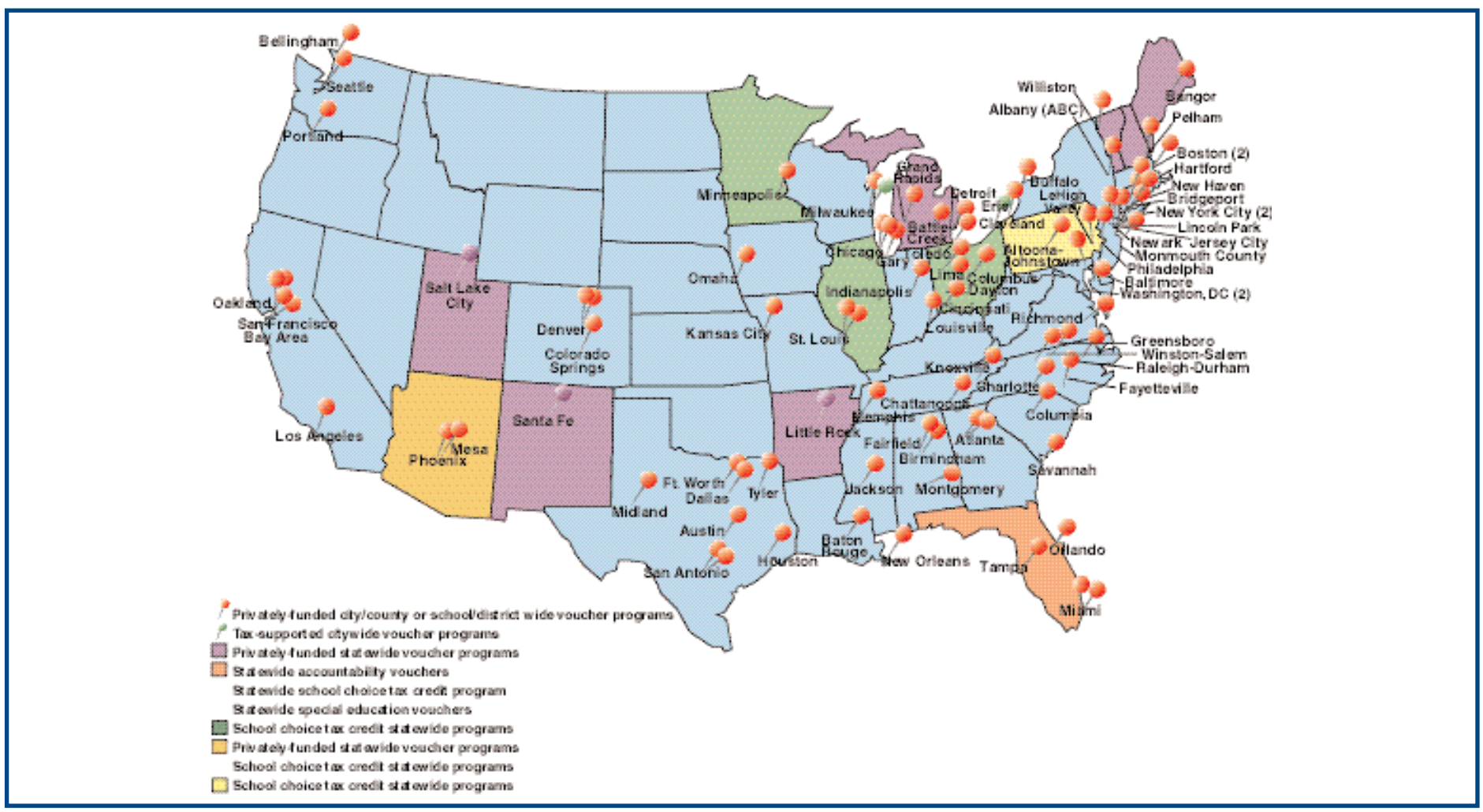
By the early 1990s, commentators had begun to wonder publicly about what the philanthropy of our generation would consist of, what unique contribution those living today could add to the rich legacy of the past. Some openly challenged today's philanthropists to be creative with their generosity, to demand results with their gifts, and to do things not done before. Having new buildings at colleges named for you, the thinking went, had been done. The time had come for a new generation of philanthropists to improve upon the past with innovation and creativity.

A fantastic new trend in private charitable giving—privately funded school choice programs—arose at this time, almost as if to fulfill the need for leadership in philanthropy. Since the creation of the first private voucher program in 1991, the nation has witnessed a proliferation of such charitable groups. The reason is clear—nothing is more important to the lives of children than education, and allowing parents the opportunity to choose the best school for their child dramatically improves student learning. There are now over **100** privately financed voucher programs, which have collectively invested over half a billion dollars toward the education of over 100,000 children.

Private voucher programs have succeeded in putting a human face on what seemed like an abstract idea by positively impacting the lives of thousands of children. Private voucher programs are periodically surveyed in order to track the progress of the movement. Recently, ***Children First America in cooperation with the Children Scholarship Fund,*** released **Just Doing It 5**, which you can read in its entirety at **www.childrenfirstamerica.org**. In the following pages, we will present an Executive Summary of the information from our surveyed programs, outline the growing trend toward tax credit supported private voucher programs, and outline the progress of Horizon—the nation's largest private voucher program.

Fritz S. Steiger
President and CEO
Children First America

Figure 1: Privately Funded Voucher Programs by State-2001



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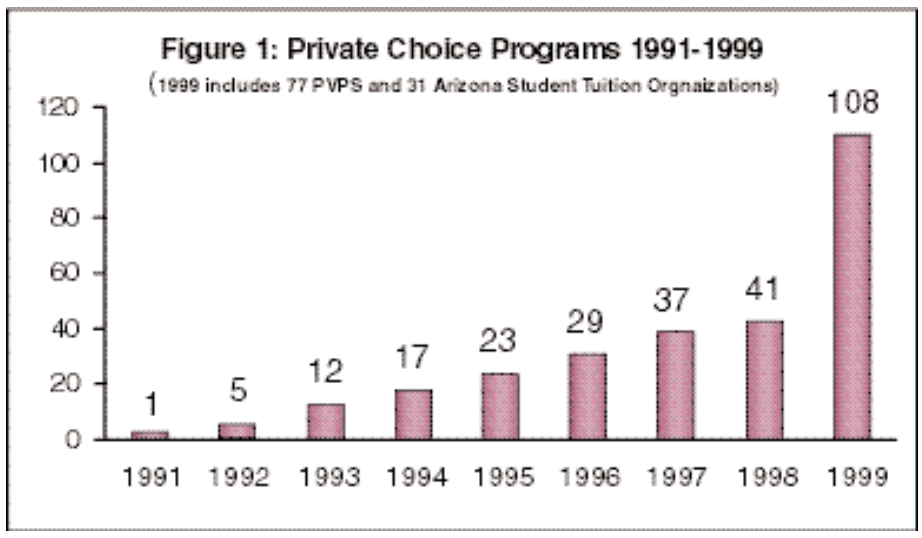
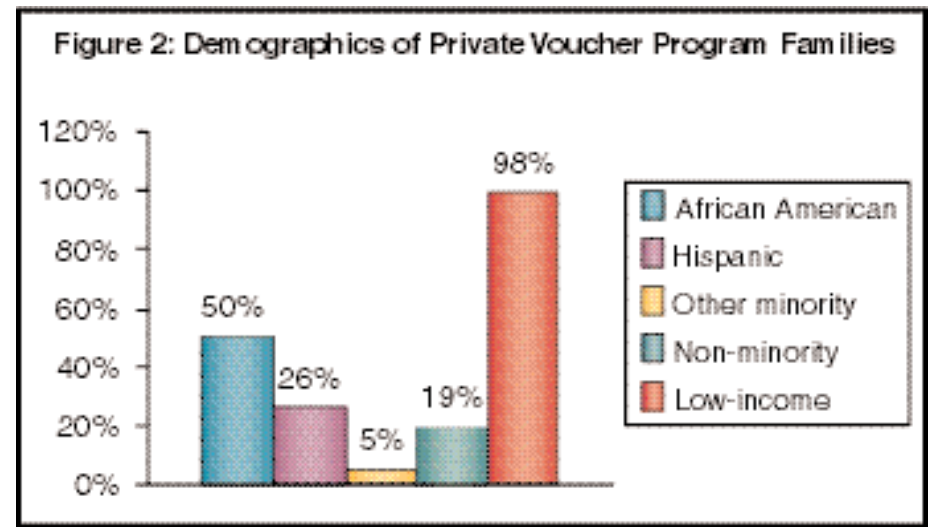
A Rising Tide: Survey Reveals Trends in the Private Choice Movement

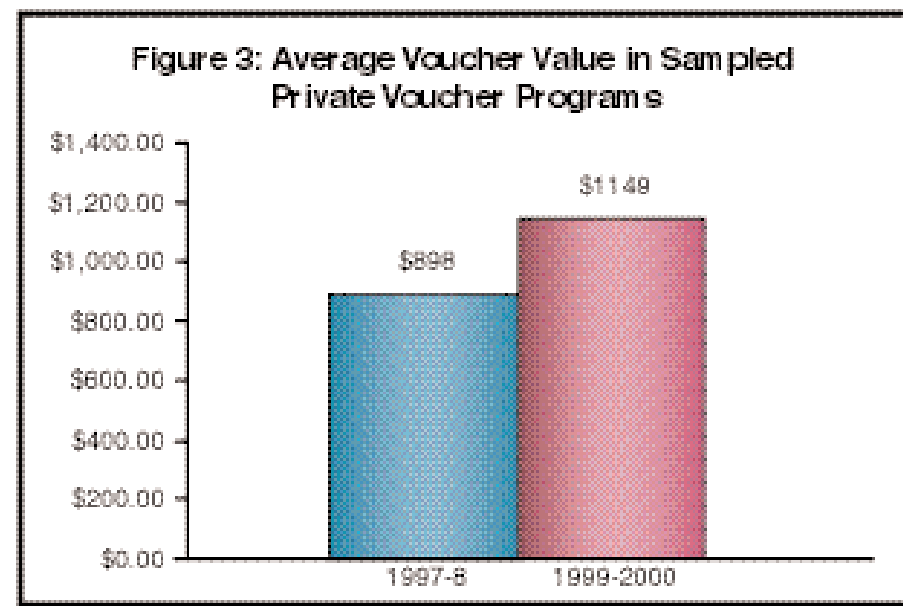
Children First America's survey of private voucher programs found a strong and growing movement. The strength of the choice movement is demonstrated both by the increasing number of programs and the increasing number of families making applications. The total number of private voucher programs is presented in Figure 1 below:



Children First America surveyed 33 of the 108 Private Voucher Programs around the country. The Private Voucher Programs in our survey sample demonstrated vigorous growth in the number of applications received in 1999, an increase of 157% when compared with 1997. Sampled programs had a total funding of $33,407,773 in 1999, with an average total funding of approximately $726,000 per program, although program budgets ranged widely, from as low as $33,000 to as high as $3,750,000.



Programs in our sample serve 32,238 students, with an average program size of 716 and an average scholarship size of $1150. This represents an increase of 28% from the 1997 average scholarship of $898. The ratio of applicants to winners for our programs was approximately 5 to 1. Despite the fact that these programs typically spend little to no money on promotion, that only low-income families are eligible for scholarships, and that participating families are still called upon to make great financial sacrifices to afford private schools, demand far exceeds supply for Private Voucher Program vouchers.



In short, privately financed voucher programs have continued to expand the number of students aided, while increasing the average aid provided to students. Private voucher programs demonstrate the demand for choice in education among low-income American families.

Full study available online at www.childrenfirstamerica.org

Children First AMERICA
parental choice in education

presents

JUST DOING IT 5

Surveying America's privately funded school choice grant programs for growth, impact, and progress

Prepared by Dr. Matthew Ladner
Director of Communications and Policy
Children First America

May 2001

Children First America, P.O. Box 330, Bentonville, AR 72712, Phone: 501-273-6957 Fax: 501-273-9362

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Tax Credit Supported Private Voucher Programs- The Arizona Model

Arizona House Bill 2074, the School Tuition Organization Tax Credit, was signed into law on April 7, 1997. The bill created a dollar-for-dollar personal income tax credit for contributions up to $200 per household for donations to public schools for extracurricular activities, and up to $500 for donations to school tuition organizations providing scholarships to students to attend private schools. Proposition 301, a ballot referendum adopted by Arizona voters in November 2000, increased the tuition tax credit amount to $650 per household. The new law went into effect in May 2001.

On January 26, 1999 the Arizona Supreme Court upheld the tuition tax credit law in a 3-2 ruling. The decision cited the Wisconsin Supreme Court's ruling on the Milwaukee choice program (*Jackson v. Benson*) and the United States Supreme Court's ruling in *Mueller v. Allen* (1983), which upheld tax deductions for school expenses. In *Mueller v. Allen*, the court ruled that the tax deductions have a secular purpose, do not have a primary effect of advancing religion, and do not create excessive church-state entanglement thus satisfying the test presented in *Lemon v. Kurtzman* (1971).

Since the successful defense of the Tax Credit program, a large number of private voucher funding organizations, known as Student Tuition Organizations, have arisen to help fund private school tuition. School Tuition Organization Tax Credit organizations have directed aid almost exclusively to low-income students, and the number of scholarships has increased each year.

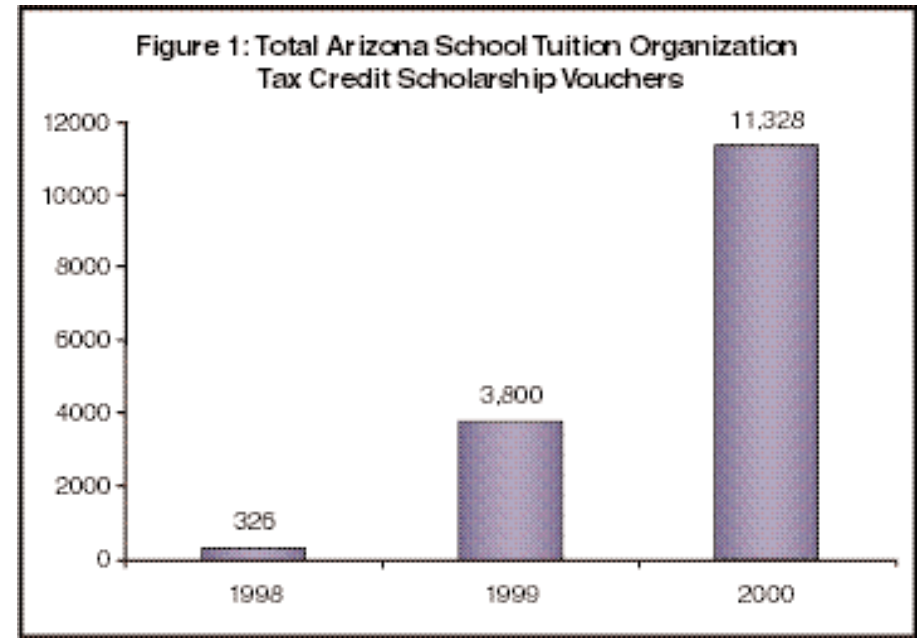
Imitation is the most sincere form of flattery, so school choice advocates in Arizona should feel proud. At the time of this writing in June of 2001, both Florida and Pennsylvania had enacted an Arizona-inspired tax credit, while similar bills passed both the Colorado and the South Carolina Houses.

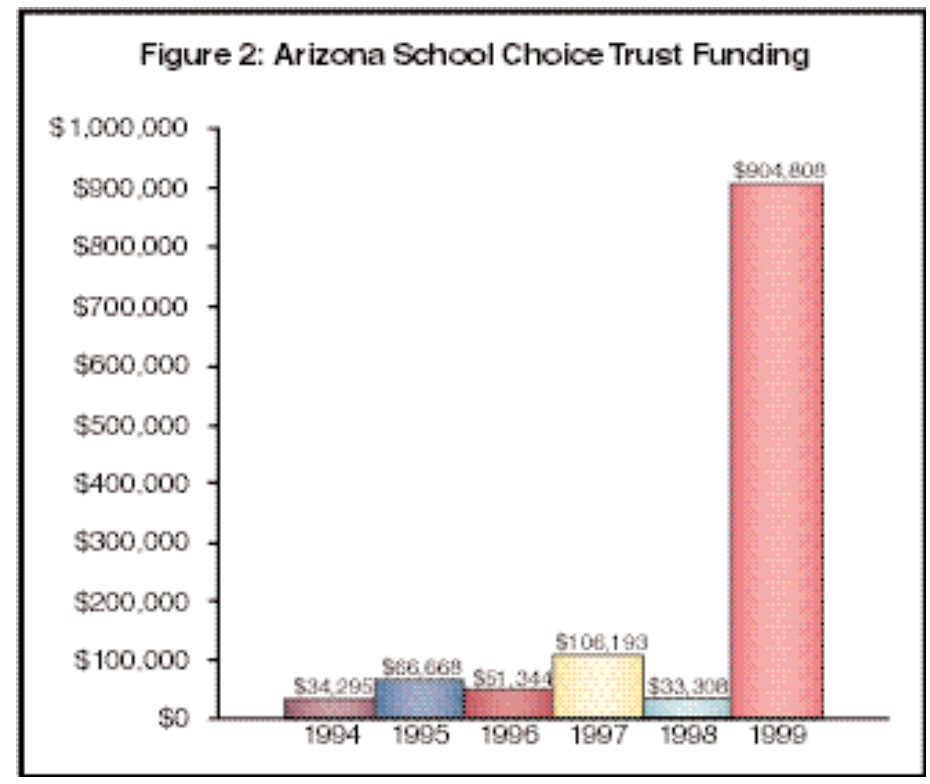
Similar bills were considered in a number of states. The level of difference an Arizona type tax credit can make to a private voucher program is demonstrated by the fundraising experience of the Arizona School Choice Trust, presented in Figure 2. The Arizona School Choice Trust is a private voucher program predating the tax credit program. The effect of the tax credit on the fundraising success after the settlement of the lawsuit was immediate and dramatic.

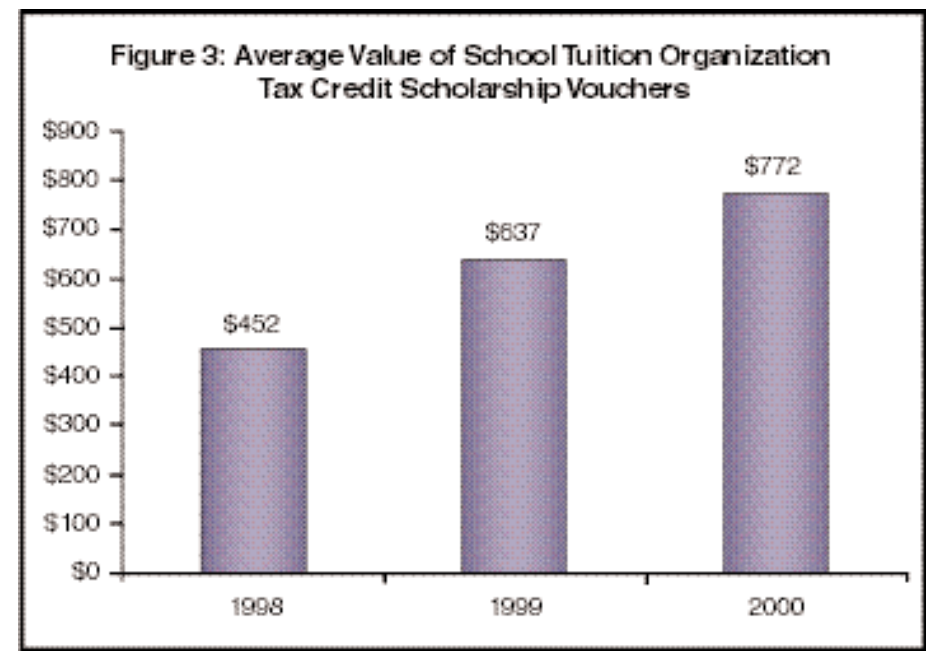
A large and diverse group of School Tuition Organizations have formed to fund the education of children. Both the total number of tuition vouchers and their average value have expanded in each year of the program. The average amount of aid per student has increased from $452 in 1998 to $772 in the year 2000, as seen in Figure 3.

Before Arizona voters increased the size of the credit, Arizona's then Superintendent of Public Instruction, Lisa Graham Keegan, estimated that tax credit donations would reach around $30,000,000 per year. The 2000 figures of 11,328 private scholarships imply that approximately 25% of Arizona private school students benefit from the program. While the number of students aided will continue to expand in the future, the Arizona program was already the largest choice program in the nation in terms of students aided.

Analysts predict that the Arizona program will continue to expand in coming years, both in terms of funds invested and the number of voucher granting programs. As additional states pass tax credit legislation, additional private tuition support organizations can be expected to flourish, and existing programs should be able to raise additional funds and help more parents choose the best school for their children.







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Horizon Disproves School Choice Myths

Robert Aguirre
Managing Director
CEO San Antonio/CEO Horizon

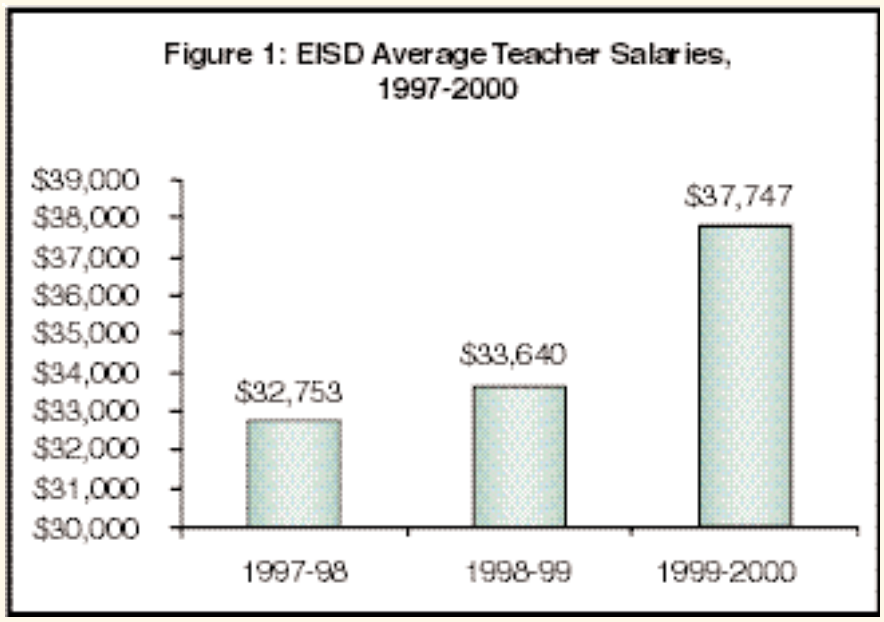
Defenders of the education status-quo claim that choice programs will "drain public schools of badly needed funds" leading to the "destruction of public education." If the fears of choice opponents have any basis in reality, we should find evidence of such terrible outcomes in the Edgewood Independent School District (EISD) in San Antonio. The CEO Horizon Program has provided the option of a school voucher to almost the entire population of the Edgewood district starting in 1998.

The Horizon program is the only school choice program devoted to an entire school district. The program has no academic qualifying criteria, and is open to all permanent residents of EISD currently attending a public school, unless entering kindergarten.

Enrollment in EISD declined from 14,142 students during the 1997-98 school year to 12,500 students in the 2000-01 school year, although several factors besides Horizon impacted total enrollment.

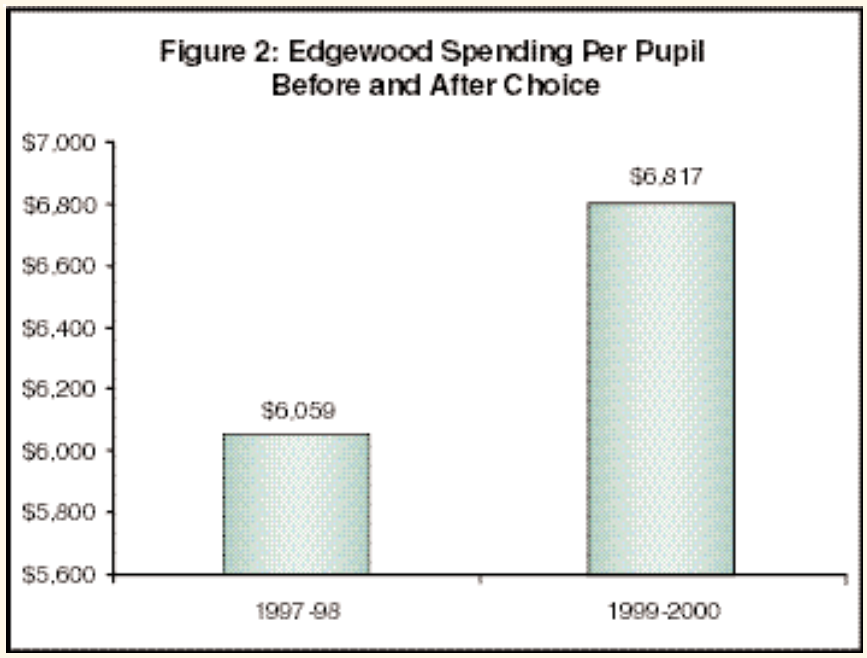
Renaissance or Destruction in Edgewood?

How has EISD fared since the Horizon program began? Some claim that the program has harmed the district. For instance, the *Dallas Morning News* ran the following quote from Edgewood Superintendent Noe Sauceda: "We estimate the CEO program has cost the district $5 million over the past few years...with that kind of decrease, we can't attract and retain quality staff." It must be noted, however, that while Edgewood total funding is lower than it would have been without Horizon, it also has fewer students to educate as a result of the program, and loses none of the local funding despite enrollment fluctuations. Average teacher pay was $4994 per year higher in 1999-2000 than in 1997-98, and the average number of pupils per teacher fell from 14.8 to 13.6 during this same period.



Total expenditures by the district have increased since the advent of the Horizon program. Rather than decreasing its spending, the Edgewood district has continued to spend more money each year since the advent of the Horizon program, despite a substantially lower enrollment. Figure 1 shows that total Edgewood spending increased after the advent of Horizon.

Total district expenditure in 1997-98 was $85,695,522 (with 14,142 students) but was $88,505,665 in the 1999-2000 school year, with 12,982 students enrolled. Best of all, the Texas Education Agency awarded EISD with a "Recognized" status in the 2000 accountability rankings for the first time, due to improvements in passing rates on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) tests.



In short, Edgewood schools have improved their standardized test scores, have fewer pupils per teacher, and have higher teacher salaries than before the Horizon program created competition for students. This is an odd way to "destroy" public education, to say the least. Predictions of doom seem completely fanciful when the data are examined closely. Further adjustments and challenges surely lie ahead for the district, but as of now, the district seems to be in the early stages of a renaissance, rather than sliding down the slippery slope to destruction.

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Education Industry News

A sampling of education industry news from* The Education Economy*, a weekly publication of the market research firm Eduventures.com, which conducts research on the pre-K-12, post-secondary, corporate training, and consumer markets worldwide. This copyrighted material is used by permission of Eduventures.com, Inc.

Curriculum and Assessment Tools Go Wireless
Mindsurf Networks, Inc., a provider of wireless computing solutions for the K-12 market, announced on May 31 that it will acquire **Discourse Technologies, Inc.**, a developer of education application software for the K-12 market. Under the terms of the agreement, Mindsurf will integrate the Discourse software with its solution to provide teachers with online, real-time curriculum and assessment tools.
www.mindsurfnetworks.com / www.discourse.com

Edison Schools to Acquire LearnNow
Edison Schools, Inc. announced on June 4 that it will acquire LearnNow, Inc., an education management company. Through the transaction, Edison is expected to gain 11 schools, 5,000 students, and $38 million in revenues in the coming school year.
www.edisonschools.com

IBM and Riverdeep Forge K-12 Alliance
On June 5, IBM Corporation and Riverdeep Group, an e-learning provider for the K-12 market, announced a strategic alliance in which the two companies will jointly promote, market, sell, and service each other's content offerings. Riverdeep also will integrate IBM technologies into its product offerings and assume overall development responsibility for the IBM Learning Village.
www.ibm.com / www.riverdeep.com

Parents Support Competition in Education
A study released by Parents In Charge, a nonprofit organization that encourages debate on U.S. education, found that people of all economic, racial, and religious backgrounds are dissatisfied with pre-K-12 education in the U.S. The report, *American Attitudes on Education*, showed 82 percent of those surveyed believe that parents, not the government, should be in charge of their children's education, and nearly three-quarters believe competition would improve education in the U.S.
www.parentsincharge.org

Professional Development for Educators
McGraw-Hill Education, a provider of pre-K-12 educational materials, announced the launch of Educators' Professional Development/McGraw-Hill, a new company specializing in professional development for teachers and school administrators. EPD/McGraw-Hill will develop integrated online and onsite teacher training programs, aligned with state and national content standards, that can be used with all of a state's adopted textbooks.
www.mcgraw-hill.com

School Internet Capability Up 77 Percent
A survey conducted by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics found that an estimated 77 percent of U.S. public school classroom computers were equipped with Internet access last year, up from 64 percent in 1999. One of the reasons for the growth is the U.S. government's E-rate program, which has committed $5.8 billion to E-rate applicants since February. The program makes services, Internet access, and internal connections available to schools and libraries at discounted rates.
nces.ed.gov

Vivendi to Acquire Houghton Mifflin
Vivendi Universal, a media and communications company, announced on June 1 that it will acquire Houghton Mifflin Company, an education publisher, in a transaction valued at $2.2 billion. The acquisition will make Vivendi the second largest publisher in the world, with annual sales of $2.2 billion.
www.vivendi.com / www.houghtonmifflin.com

WRC Media Partners with ThinkBox
On May 23, WRC Media, Inc., an education publisher for the K-12 market, and ThinkBox, Inc., a creator of Internet-delivered education programs for the K-12 and home markets, announced a partnership in which WRC Media will license its Weekly Reader brand names to ThinkBox. In return, WRC Media will make a strategic investment in ThinkBox and acquire the distribution rights for ThinkBox's school programs.
www.thinkbox.com / www.wrcmedia.com

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Marriott Waterfront Hotel
October 15-16, 2001

This conference brings together leading executives, investors, and analysts to address top issues in the pre-K-12, postsecondary, and corporate learning markets: Which business models are proving effective? What will it take for more firms to reach profitability? How will market consolidation affect industry maturation?

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For more information, contact **Ana Troncoso** at 617/426-5622 ext.43, or visit **www.eduventures.com/events/events-home.cfm**.

In Memoriam

James P. Boyle, 1933-2001
Founder, Ombudsman Educational Services

James P. Boyle, the educator-entrepreneur who founded Ombudsman Educational Services in 1975 and became a leader and role model for the emerging education services industry in the 1990s, died on May 25, 2001, at the age of 68.

Boyle helped found the Association of Education Practitioners and Providers (AEPP), the trade association for the education industry. In 1998, he received the AEPP Entrepreneurial Leadership Award in recognition of his many achievements as a private education provider.

Boyle pioneered the practice of public schools outsourcing educational services to private companies. While serving as a dean and principal/assistant superintendent for Mundelein High School, he developed an alternative education model for students who were not succeeding with the traditional approach to learning. When the North Chicago Community High School asked him to establish an alternative education program to address the high number of expulsions in that district, Boyle formed Ombudsman with the aim of turning dropouts into graduates.

Boyle's first Ombudsman program was run out of a refurbished gas station, where he worked with 25 students under contract with the local school district. The company now serves some 5,000 students annually in more than 70 learning centers and charter schools in 11 states.

Boyle developed an individualized learning model that enabled students to progress at their own pace while also making sure they had mastered the material. He demonstrated to other education entrepreneurs that a successful educational model could be replicated commercially without losing the integrity of the learning environment.

He is survived by his wife, Loretta Sweeney, the cofounder of Ombudsman; his children Greg Boyle, Megan Chody, Patricia Sweeney, and Sue Datin; and grandchildren Matthew, Jack, Hannah, Elle, and Brett.

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Masters of Their Own Souls

AN INTERVIEW WITH JOHN TAYLOR GATTO
BY GEORGE A. CLOWES

John Taylor Gatto was an award-winning junior high school teacher for 30 years in Manhattan's public schools. He gave it all up abruptly in 1991, resigning very publicly on the op-ed page of the *Wall Street Journal*. He said he could no longer remain in a system that trained children merely to obey orders, where curiosity was stamped out, and where attempts at reform were fruitless because "[s]chool is too vital a jobs-project, contract-giver, and protector of the social order to allow itself to be 'reformed.'"

Born in Monongahela, Pennsylvania, Gatto attended public schools and a private Catholic boarding school, all in western Pennsylvania. He did undergraduate college work at Cornell, the University of Pittsburgh, and Columbia, then served in the U.S. Army medical corps at Fort Knox, Kentucky and Fort Sam Houston, Texas. Following army service he did graduate work at the City University of New York, Hunter College, Yeshiva, the University of California, and Cornell.

After college, Gatto worked as a film scriptwriter, advertising copywriter, songwriter, taxi driver, jewelry designer, and hot dog vendor before becoming a schoolteacher. His prowess as teacher earned him numerous awards from a wide range of organizations, including the New York State Education Department, Encyclopedia Britannica, the Council of Chief State School Officers, the New York State Senate, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, and the New York Public School Alliance.

Gatto climaxed his teaching career as 1990 and 1991 New York State Teacher of the Year, after being named New York City Teacher of the Year for 1989, 1990, and 1991.

Since leaving teaching, Gatto has spoken widely on the subject of school reform and has written four books on the subject, including *Dumbing Us Down: The Hidden Curriculum of Compulsory Schooling*. His newest book is *The Underground History of American Education*. Gatto spoke recently with *School Reform News* Managing Editor George Clowes.

"I believe that every teacher should realize the dignity of his calling; that he is a social servant set apart for the maintenance of proper social order and the securing of the right social growth. I believe that in this way the teacher always is the prophet of the true God and the usherer in of the true kingdom of God."

John Dewey, Pedagogic Creed statement of 1897

"Government schooling is the most radical adventure in history. It kills the family by monopolizing the best times of childhood and by teaching disrespect for home and parents . . .

"Good schools don't need more money or a longer year; they need real free-market choices, variety that speaks to every need and runs risks. We don't need a national curriculum or national testing either."

John Taylor Gatto's resignation statement
Wall Street Journal, July 25, 1991

CLOWES: *From your perspective as a teacher for 30 years, what do you see government schools doing to children?*

GATTO: People who are well-schooled in government schools have a low threshold of boredom. They need constant novelty to feel alive because they have only the flimsiest inner lives. They can't sit still without their minds wandering off. Changing classes at short intervals is a drill to prepare them for changing associates and possessions in dizzying profusion.

Here's how schools pull the trick off: They destroy the inner life. They do this by training poorly in history, philosophy, economics, literature, poetry, theology, music, art—anything that is known to develop a personal inner life. As a result, most people who have been through government schools need life-long tutelage, cradle-to-grave schooling to make any sense of their days. They're not taught to have an independent livelihood.

It used to be common in American schools that you weren't allowed to enter first grade unless you could read. Now most children are taught to read at school, but only a fraction escape able to read well—in a world in which, for the most part, people are penalized harshly for not being able to read well.

CLOWES: *What can be done to fix the public schools?*

GATTO: There is no way to fix them. That's the point of my latest book, which took me eight years to write. It's an enormous system where no individual has very much influence, and the system has built-in protections against change. Even the current standards movement is certain to be only rhetorically realized because the system has its own structural logic, and that does not include excellence. To say that you're going to produce high standards by putting money, or pressure, or tests at fourth through eighth grade—that is Pollyanna nonsense.

All systems are the same regardless of what particular ideology drives them. The integrity of the system is considerably more important to the system than the mission it nominally holds. The American education system is a Soviet-style system, and just because we live in the United States is no guarantee that it's not a Soviet system. It destroys people wholesale while it provides for the world's most reliable domestic economy. That was in the original design of the system back at the turn of the twentieth century, and it has achieved those purposes perfectly.

"All systems are the same regardless of what particular ideology drives them. The integrity of the system is considerably more important to the system than the mission it nominally holds."

CLOWES: *What were those original purposes of the public education system?*

GATTO: I'm about to give you the six purposes of government schooling. I didn't invent them; they're straight out of the mouth of the man for whom the honorary Lectureship in Secondary Education at Harvard University is named: Alexander James Inglis. He was Harvard's first Professor of Secondary Education, and in 1918 he published a book called *The Principles of Secondary Education*. It took me a long time to find his book but I finally located a copy.

I came across Inglis's name in a 1949 book by James Bryan Conant called *The Child, the Parent, and the State*, where Conant said flatly that American schooling was the result of a coup, and the best person to go to for the details of the coup was Alexander Inglis. Now, Conant had some fairly good bona fides—he was president of Harvard, High Commissioner of Germany after the second World War, and the father of the large, comprehensive high school—and so if he said that the system is the result of a coup, I think we can be sure that he wasn't speaking metaphorically.

Inglis also was the editor of Houghton Mifflin's Secondary School Publishing Division, and so he decided what people who were entering the new field of secondary education were going to read at the teacher college level. I say "new field of secondary education" because right up to the first World War, an elementary school education was what the vast majority of the American population got.

Inglis's book turned out to be 800 pages of tiny print. I spent about a week working my way through and it was just dull as dishwater until suddenly I realized that what he was describing was schools as they are today, not schools as they were in 1918, because they didn't exist then. So this very, very dull book is a blueprint for today's schools. And here's what Inglis said were the six purposes of this new type of schooling.

Inglis said that the first function of schooling is *adjustive*, where "[s]chools are to establish fixed habits of reaction to authority." I remember that from my military training. Fixed habits of reaction completely preclude critical judgement—you can't have critical judgement and fixed habits of reaction.

The second purpose of secondary schools is the *diagnostic* function. School is to diagnose each student's proper social role, logging the evidence mathematically and anecdotally on cumulative records for life-long inspection. The communist Chinese have been doing

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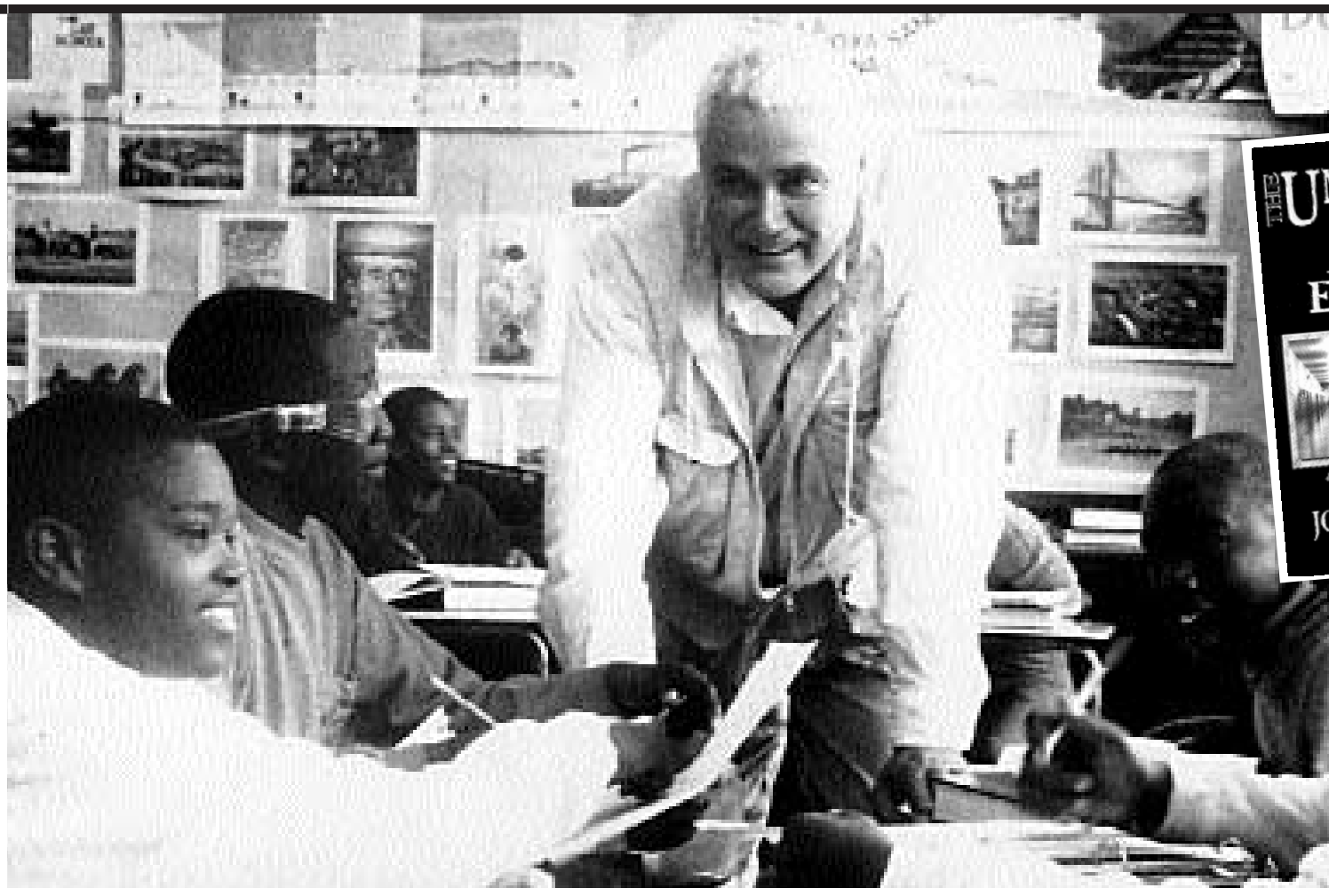
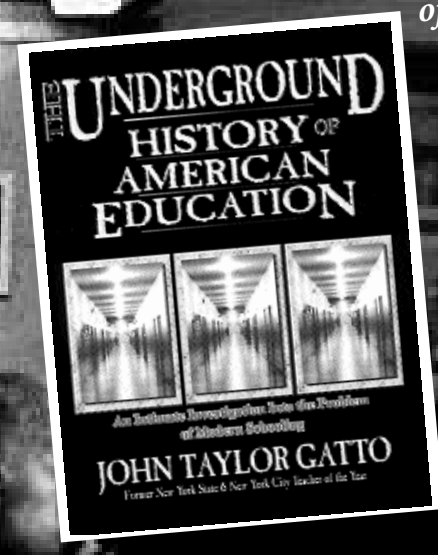


The Underground History of American Education



John Taylor Gatto's new book may be ordered from his Web site at **www.johntaylorgatto.com**. Orders that mention *School Reform News* will receive a complementary cassette tape of one of Gatto's lectures, valued at $8.00.

this from the beginning, and they call this kind of official file the *Dangan*.

The third purpose of school is the *sorting* function. School is to sort children by training individuals only so far as their likely destination in the social machine, and not one step beyond. Now, many teachers run smack into this when they make the uncomfortable discovery that their supposedly "stupid" children are capable of the same kind of work as their "bright" children. But when they essay some efforts in that direction, they're slapped down by people who say, "This is child abuse, because these stupid kids can't possibly learn that material."

CLOWES: *It sounds like Tom Daschle and Bob Chase, who say "You can't demand more from these children unless you give schools more resources."*

GATTO: I had no resources and I demanded of my students exactly what was demanded of me at Cornell and Columbia. I didn't modify my language or my expectations. I expected college-level performance, and I got it much more often than I didn't. I'm not saying that it wasn't without a lot of grief and argument, but most of the grief and argument was with the school administration and with my fellow teachers. Because when you get students to understand what they're capable of, they start asking questions in classes that have been dumbed down. "Why are you treating us like this?" they ask, "We're not stupid."

Back to Inglis. His fourth function is *conformity*, where children are to be made alike, regardless of their background. This is not done from any passion for egalitarian ideals, but so that their future behavior will be predictable. Inglis is talking about simplifying and leveling the people to make them more predictable participants in the economy.

The fifth function is called the *hygienic* function, but this has nothing to do with individual hygiene. It has to do with the health of the race. Hygiene is a polite way of saying that school is expected to accelerate natural selection by tagging the unfit so clearly that they will drop from the reproduction sweepstakes in self-disgust.

The last purpose that Inglis listed is the *propaedeutic* function. This is a fancy word meaning that a small fraction of lucky individuals will quietly be taught to take over management of this continuing project—guardians of a population deliberately dumbed down and rendered childlike in order that government and economic life can be managed with a minimum of hassle.

"When you get students to understand what they're capable of, they start asking questions in classes that have been dumbed down. 'Why are you treating us like this?' they ask, 'We're not stupid.'"

In that context, it's interesting to note that in the Presidential election of 2000, four of the six final candidates were from private boarding schools that had a collective graduating class yearly of under 2,000 people: Al Gore, George Bush, Steve Forbes, and John McCain.

If you're a Darwinian, the explanation is simple natural selection. On the other hand, if you're trying to decipher some of the anomalies of systematic schooling, it's wonderfully enlightening to look at the techniques that the nation's top private boarding schools employ. The most amazing thing is that what these schools require of their student body doesn't cost a penny. In other words, it wouldn't cost anything to create identical consciousness for everybody.

When I lecture homeschooling groups, I suggest they select one or all of the techniques that are common to these schools. They're simple, cost-free, time-tested, and they work. My personal bias is towards the classical schooling technique because the little bit of what I had has stuck with me and served me very, very well. But these techniques have been understood for a long time by people who wanted to do the best for themselves and their children. And the secret of all the successes I won as a school teacher was that I adopted those procedures.

CLOWES: *So you set the same high expectations for everyone?*

GATTO: It's more than that. Although I had gone to a Jesuit boarding school for one year in third grade, I didn't have the same kind of intimacy with the techniques these top private schools use, except from reading about them. But I did have some awareness of how two Ivy League colleges functioned—Cornell and Columbia—and I said, "I will simply employ these procedures that were used on me and see what happens."

What happened was a revelation of what's possible. I certainly don't attribute it to any personal magnetism on my part. But I took the boot off my students' necks. Even though I come from a conservative background, I had too much evidence in front of me that what you and I call talent or even genius is as common as the air we breathe.

To develop that talent or genius, each child needs a tremendous amount of raw experience and a tremendous amount of responsibility. Think of young Ben Franklin, young Coke Stevenson, or young John D. Rockefeller as examples of what that can do. The child also needs an active inner life in order to be master of his or her own soul or spirit, and that inner life comes from studying history, philosophy, economics, literature, music, art, and theology.

It's significant that when the British owned North America, they took steps to prevent the development of the active literacies of writing and public speaking in the colonial population. If you can read well, and fluently, you can get access to the best minds that ever lived. But you can't change things unless you can convince others, and you do that only by writing and speaking. The British knew they could handle the odd fish that swam with a copy of Plato under its fin, but what they couldn't handle were people who spoke like Demosthenes or wrote like Shakespeare.

CLOWES: *Someone like Thomas Jefferson.*

GATTO: Right. I would absolutely concentrate on the rhetoric and debate stages of classical education. Incidentally, Jefferson said there were only five reasons that could theoretically justify a forced schooling system. He said one was to learn your rights. But the second reason is that it's useless to know your rights unless you also learn how to defend your rights. Take that package as Siamese twins.

The third reason was to learn the ways of the human heart so well that you can neither be cheated nor fooled. Well, the age-old way to know the ways of the human heart—other than experience and counsel from your elders—is through literature. Great literature is a laboratory of the human heart in its different manifestations, and when you read it you come to terms with these laboratory situations.

The fourth reason was to learn enough of the common stock of knowledge so you cannot be intimidated or fooled by experts. And the final reason was to learn useful practical knowledge, such as building a house, growing your own food, or making your own clothes. Those were the only reasons Jefferson could muster to justify forced schooling.

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California

Confidential Records Found in Trash

Although California state law requires that outdated confidential school records be destroyed by burning or shredding, dozens of files containing sensitive information about schoolchildren were found in a playground trash can at Northridge Elementary School in Fair Oaks. The files contained records of behavioral problems, parent-teacher correspondence, observations of family problems, and reports of suspected health and emotional problems, including suspected sexual abuse.

Officials with the San Juan Unified School District expressed regret, saying it was an isolated incident. District staff are regularly instructed on how to dispose of records but in this case someone dropped the ball, said Mike Parks, the district's director of pupil and personnel services. However, it appeared unlikely the employee responsible would be fired.

While apologetic to those affected, Parks told *The Sacramento Bee,* "We're looking at this as a learning experience."

The Sacramento Bee
June 28, 2001

Connecticut

Forced Apology for Rudeness Sparks Debate

A debate over the limits to free speech in school has ensued after a Connecticut high school student was forced to apologize over the school's public address system for making disrespectful remarks that disrupted a special assembly on job interview skills. While the Connecticut Civil Liberties Union takes the position that students should be able to present their opinions, school administrators argue free speech can be curtailed if a student's behavior is viewed as disruptive.

Fifteen-year-old Tristan Kading, a sophomore at Stonington High School, was sent to a mandatory assembly in May, where company officials from McDonald's had agreed to host a session on job interview skills. When a representative from the company asked for volunteers for mock job interviews, Kading volunteered, but when asked about himself, he said he hated large corporations like McDonald's.

"That won't get you a job at McDonald's," said the interviewer. Kading responded that he would not want to work for a company that falsely advertises its French fries, a remark that drew loud applause from his friends. Administrators then removed Kading from the assembly and, at the urging of principal Stephen Murphy, he read the apology over the school intercom.

The Hartford Courant
June 3, 2001

Florida

Not One Failing School?

There are no failing government schools in Florida, according to the May 30 report card generated by the state's A-Plus reform plan. While some critics thought the results raise questions about the toughness or validity of the state's tests, Gov. Jeb Bush contended that absence of failing schools shows the hard work of teachers and students in "developing reading, writing, and math skills is paying off."

When a school receives two failing grades from the state within a four-year period, its students become eligible for vouchers to attend private schools, or they can transfer to better-performing government schools. In the first round of report cards, 78 schools received their first Fs. But by the second issuance of report cards, all had pulled up their grades sufficiently to avoid a second F. A study by Jay Greene for the Manhattan Institute indicated the threat of vouchers provided a powerful motivation for school staffs to improve.

However, the continued absence of any "failing schools" after report card No. 3 raises a question whether the state is taking too narrow a view of when students should become eligible for "opportunity scholarships." That narrow view contrasts with the broad school choice opportunities now available to Florida's disabled children. In late May, Bush signed into law the McKay Scholarship Program, which will make the state's 340,000 disabled students eligible for vouchers if their parents are not satisfied with their government education.

The Friedman Report
June 2001

Georgia

Charter Students Get 1/3 Less Funding

Although Georgia law requires local school districts to treat charter schools "no less favorably than other local schools" when it comes to instructional and administrative funding, DeKalb County school officials are providing Stone Mountain Charter School with 35 percent less funding per student than other county middle schools.

Although Stone Mountain has a contract that specifies it will receive the amount of revenue earned from the full-time equivalent pupil count and appropriate local and federal funds, the full amount of funding has not been forthcoming, forcing the charter school to rely on credit and operate at a monthly deficit. Stone Mountain has taken the public school system to court.

Center for Education Reform Newswire
May 22, 2001

Iowa

Teacher Performance Pay Plan Signed

Iowa has become the first state to institute a statewide performance pay plan for public school teachers. Gov. Tom Vilsack signed the bill in May over the objections of the Iowa State Education Association.

While the bill eliminates the seniority pay scale, it also contains all the elements that led to backtracking in Cincinnati this year: uncertain funding, uncertain teacher participation, and an extended entrenchment period, which leaves plenty of time to slow it down or stop it before it gets rolling.

Education Intelligence Agency Communique´
May 29, 2001

Kentucky

Parents Win Homeschooling Lawsuit

In a May 31 decision, Circuit Court Judge Tyler L. Gill overruled a lower court that had ordered a 15-year-old homeschooled child into government schooling until she turned 18, two years beyond the state's compulsory attendance law. The lower court had found the child guilty of truancy and issued a pickup order while issuing an arrest warrant for her mother for contempt of court.

In voiding those orders, Gill wrote that "parents have a fundamental right to direct the education and upbringing of their children. This right includes the right of parents to choose an alternative in lieu of public schools."

However, the judge did go on to assert that it is reasonable for state authorities to demand proof—such as test scores—from homeschooling parents that their children are being educated.

The Friedman Report
June 2001

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Maryland

Community Center Barred to Homeschoolers

A group of homeschooling parents in Calvert County wanted to use a local community center to hold meetings of a geography club for their children and other homeschooled children. The county said no, holding the families lost their privilege of using the community center when they decided to homeschool. The families plan to ask a federal court to declare the county policy a violation of free speech and equal protection of the laws.

"Anybody can use the community center, but we don't want space taken up for private education. We have a lot of facilities for that," said David F. Hale, president of Calvert County's Board of County Commissioners.

With the rapid growth of homeschooling, these kinds of controversies are spreading around the country. In Arizona, a couple teaching two blind children at home sued when the Scottsdale Unified School District denied the children use of the county's special education services.

The Friedman Report
June 2001

Nebraska

Union Objects to Paying Teacher More

During March of last year, administrators from the Crete Public Schools in Nebraska were looking to hire a new industrial technology teacher. After a month of advertising, the district could find only two qualified applicants, and offered one of them the job.

The candidate told them he wouldn't take the job for less than $24,000. The district agreed and the board approved the amount, but failed to inform the Crete Education Association, which was in the midst of contract negotiations with the district.

In August, the union and the district agreed on a salary schedule that started at $21,650. Since the new teacher's contract was now out of compliance with the contract, the district gave the teacher a new contract at $21,650, with a $2,350 bonus to cover the difference between base salary and what he had been promised.

The union filed a complaint with the state Commission of Industrial Relations, claiming the arrangement was a "deviation" that violated the collective bargaining agreement. The commission agreed. The Nebraska State Education Association celebrated the ruling with a four-page cover story in its monthly newsletter, in which it noted, "The district cannot unilaterally offer incentives against the wishes of the local association."

While the story delved into state and federal labor law in great detail, it failed to report what happened to the teacher and his pay.

Education Intelligence Agency Communiqué
June 11, 2001

New Jersey

Schundler Wins GOP Gubernatorial Primary

Jersey City mayor Bret Schundler won an upset gubernatorial primary victory on June 26 over the best-known Republican in the Garden State, former U.S. Representative Bob Franks, who almost beat Democrat Jon Corzine for U.S. Senate last year. Schundler, who received 57 percent of the vote in the highest primary turnout in 20 years, will face Democrat Jim McGreevey in the fall.

The New Jersey Education Association, the main teacher union in the state, has declared Schundler its No. 1 enemy and is expected to spend "buckets of money" to elect McGreevey.

The union has plenty of reasons to dislike the former Wall Street executive, who has won re-election three times in a staunchly Democratic city where only 6 percent of voters are registered Republicans. Schundler is a strong advocate of school choice, has helped open a charter school, has proposed a tuition tax credit plan, and has questioned the morality of the teacher unions opposing choice in education.

"Tell me how keeping poor kids trapped in schools that consistently won't reform helps society," he asks.

Wall Street Journal
June 28, 2001

Oregon

No College Tuition Vouchers for High Schoolers

Oregon State Senator Avel Gordly, a Democrat from Portland, withdrew a novel school voucher bill from further consideration in June when it became clear the proposal would fail in the House, even though it would most likely pass in the Senate. The bill would have allowed high school juniors and seniors in the state to take college courses, with the tuition paid for by their high schools. Classes could be taken at local community colleges and at public or private universities, including religious institutions.

Teacher unions and public school officials strongly opposed the bill, saying it would drain funds from school districts and criticizing the idea as a way to introduce "vouchers" into the state.

Gordly told the *Statesman Journal* the program had been unfairly tarnished by calling it a "voucher." It wasn't a voucher, she claimed, because students would still be enrolled at their public high school. Under this definition, K-12 students could take publicly funded classes at private and religious institutions and not be considered "voucher" students as long as they remained enrolled at their local public schools.

After the bill was pulled, a compromise agreement was reached allowing a state-funded pilot program to be established, with a sampling of students from urban, suburban, and rural districts.

Statesman Journal
June 22, 2001

Texas

Student Kicked Unconscious for "Racist" Rebel Flag

After a school official branded Ryan Zane Oleichi as a "racist" for wearing a tiny Confederate flag on his shirt, students at Labay Middle School outside of Houston, Texas began to verbally abuse and harass the 13-year-old student.

On April 26, Confederate Memorial Day in Texas, Oleichi was carrying a school library book with a Confederate flag on the cover when he was attacked by a black student and a Hispanic student. The Hispanic student kicked Oleichi in the head with steel-toed boots until he was unconscious, sending him to the hospital for three days. When he returned to school, he was subjected to still more verbal abuse and death threats.

School officials did nothing about the beating incident or about the continuing abuse, even though the Hispanic assailant was now reported as saying he was "not satisfied, and won't be until Ryan is dead." The District Attorney also refused to file charges. A week after Oleichi returned to school, his mother withdrew him and will educate him at home.

Oleichi had attended school several times without incident wearing the shirt with the Confederate flag patch, measuring a mere one inch by one and a half inches. But on February 19, Assistant Principal Cheryl Morrison punished him with a three-day detention for wearing the flag on his shirt—even though school rules call for only a one-day suspension for dress code violations. After the detention, Morrison forced Oleichi to apologize publicly to all the black students for being a "racist."

Southern Legal Resource Center
May 30, 2001

Vermont

Union Protests Make-up Days

Teacher union representatives from Rutland City have withdrawn a grievance protesting having to work make-up days because of school being cancelled for three days of particularly harsh weather earlier in the year. The city rarely closes school even on days when snow is falling.

When administrators decided to add those days to the end of the school year, the local union representative balked and filed a grievance. Although the teachers wanted their grievance to send a message, community members perceived the grievance as meaning the teachers didn't want to work, and several letters in the *Rutland Herald* blasted the teachers. A union representative was quoted as saying, "I'm always aghast at how we're perceived by the population at large."

The Rutland City teachers dropped the grievance but came out ahead. Their contract calls for them to work 185 days this year, 178 of which are to be with students. The school board compromised, allowing teachers to work only 183 days, 176 of which will be with students.

Rutland Herald
June 11, 2001

Virginia

No Good Deed Goes Unpunished

A mother is challenging the Loudoun County School District's zero tolerance policy with a lawsuit charging her son's right of due process was violated when the district suspended him for possession of a knife that he took away from a suicidal student.

Ben Ratner was an eighth-grader attending class in 1999 at the Blue Ridge Middle School when he learned that a troubled friend had a knife and was contemplating suicide. He took the knife from her and locked it in his locker, planning to take it home and have his mother, a nurse, contact the girl's parents. But school officials found out about the knife from another student and Ratner was suspended for four months by the school board. The girl made an unsuccessful suicide attempt shortly after the incident.

Assisted by the Rutherford Institute, Ratner's mother appealed to the board to reverse the suspension. Her request was denied, although school officials admitted Ratner's actions had been "noble" and "admirable" and that he posed no threat to himself or anyone else.

Education Reporter
June 2001

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Deja Vu: The Case for School Choice

After 12 years, inner-city schools still fail to educate

"American schools are in trouble, and inner-city students suffer the most. Despite ever-increasing funding for education, test scores have been falling since 1963, and today it is virtually impossible to get a decent education in an inner-city public school. There are, however, a few rays of hope—from research on what makes a good school to structural reforms that would give more students access to good schools."

"Bonita Brodt reports from the front lines. After months observing an inner-city public elementary school in Chicago, she concludes that 'we are at risk of losing an entire generation of children to the culture of poverty.'"

Although the observations have a familiar, contemporary ring to them, they were in fact written 12 years ago, in November 1989, and subsequently published in the 1990 Cato Institute book, *Liberating Schools: Education in the Inner City*, edited by David Boaz. Since then, "an entire generation of children" has progressed through the nation's inner-city public schools, where it still "is virtually impossible to get a decent education."

In the introductory chapter to the book, "The Public School Monopoly: America's Berlin Wall," Boaz makes what remains one of the best cases for school choice. He explains why a system organized like the old Soviet Union has no competitive incentive to produce high-quality education efficiently or to produce the kind of well-educated graduates that parents, employers, and college professors expect.

But simply giving parents a choice of public schools is not enough, warns Boaz, because that approach lacks the necessary incentives for successful educators to replicate school models that work—as the experience of over-subscribed magnet schools demonstrates. It is the competitive, for-profit market economy that brings high quality and low prices for consumers, not directives from government officials.

Boaz lists the common objections to school choice, which have remained fairly constant throughout the past decade: private schools don't have sufficient capacity; choice is unconstitutional; parents won't make good choices; choice would enhance segregation; and—still a favorite—private schools are not "accountable" to the taxpayers. That brought this timeless response from education reformer John E. Chubb of the Brookings Institution:

"That's a laughable position," said Chubb. "Milwaukee officials have been holding their public schools 'accountable' for years with dis-

"It is the competitive, for-profit market economy that brings high quality and low prices for consumers, not directives from government officials."

For more information…

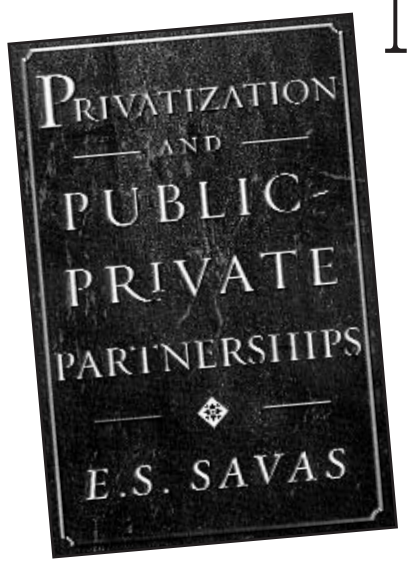
WWW *Liberating Schools: Education in the Inner City*, may be ordered from Cato's Web site at **www.cato.org.**

astrous results. It's quite comical to say that private schools whose diplomas are recognized by state universities can't be held accountable by the parents who send their kids there."

Boaz makes a strong case for school choice. His argument is all the more compelling and urgent since an estimated 20 million students have passed through inner-city public schools in the 12 years since he first argued his case and yet most of these schools—despite higher funding—still are not delivering an adequate education to the students who are forced to attend them.

Book review

Privatization: No More Excuses



Privatization and Public-Private Partnerships

BY E.S. SAVAS
New York, NY: Chatham House Publishers, 2000.
34.95 (pb); to order call 212/529-4686
or visit www.chathamhouse.com.

Reviewed by Joseph L. Bast

The spread of personal computers and word processing software has enabled every second-hander of ideas to write a book, or even five or six books. As a result, we are inundated with books that often are poorly reasoned and edited and not worth reading. The literature on school reform is more burdened by this surfeit of second-rate literature than any other area of public policy.

E.S. Savas's new book, his first since 1987, makes apparent the wide divide between a true expert and the many amateurs who play at debating the privatization of public services, including schooling. *Privatization and Public-Private Partnerships* is the result of 30 years of fieldwork by the man who co-invented the word "privatization," was the first to implement it, and has devoted a lifetime to its study and promotion.

It is a pleasure to read a book that is written clearly and with brevity, with a minimum of jargon and a focus on precision and accuracy. Savas defines terms, plots goods and services according to their exclusion and consumption properties, lists steps and options and pros and cons in straightforward tables, and more. The footnotes show the author's total mastery of the literature and will serve as the best bibliography on privatization now in print. The book's tone combines a scientist's objectivity with a genuine respect for the diverse values and concerns of his audience.

Chapter 10, on "Reforming Education and Privatizing the Welfare State," makes a potent case for school vouchers. The usual objections are raised and answered with unusual confidence and simplicity, something writers wrapped up in the parental choice movement find difficult to do. Savas's conversation with Myron Lieberman, mentioned in a footnote, clearly paid off as this leading choice thinker's distinctions are carefully incorporated. It's a *tour de force* in fewer than 20 pages.

Opponents of school vouchers—whether from the left or the right ends of the political spectrum—will benefit considerably from this clear and compelling explanation of what privatization is, how it works, evidence of its success in a wide range of fields and countries, and why vouchers are the most appropriate form of privatization to apply to schooling. Commenting on one of his tables, Savas writes, "the voucher system and the market system stand out with almost unbroken strings of positive attributes."

This book is highly recommended.

Joseph Bast is president of The Heartland Institute, the publisher of School Reform News. *He can be reached by email at jbast@heartland.org*

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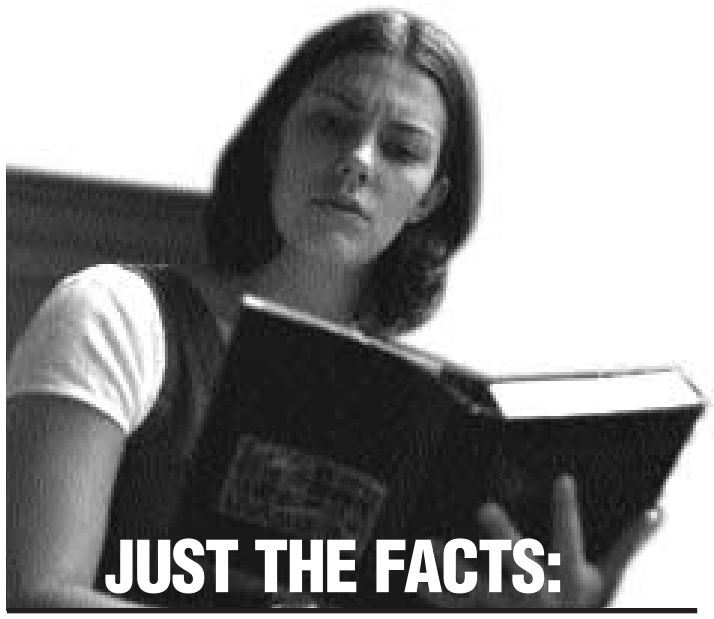
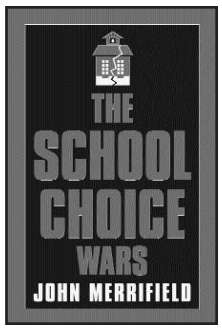


JUST THE FACTS:

Summer Reading

***School Reform News'* contributing editors and friends helped compile this list of recommended books for summer reading.**

TOP PICKS



John Merrifield, *The School Choice Wars*
Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press Inc., 2001

With refreshing even-handedness for one who advocates parental choice as a reform catalyst, Merrifield contends that "much of what is said to advocate and oppose parental choice is wrong, misleading, or irrelevant." But while discussing policy errors and political strategy mistakes, he also suggests corrections.

"[This book] is a courageous call for proponents of competition and parental choice to put behind them the frustrations and compromises of the 1990s and embrace once again the case for universal nondiscriminatory school choice," says Heartland Institute President Joseph L. Bast, who named the book his "favorite for Best School Reform Book of 2001."

Diane Ravitch, *Left Back: A Century of Failed School Reforms*
New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 2000

Although the express purpose of American public education is to educate every child—essentially a gift of knowledge to posterity—high dropout rates and mediocre test scores belie that promise for many children.

In this disturbing book, education scholar Diane Ravitch relates how education reformers over the past century deliberately betrayed that promise of educational equality by promoting the belief that high-quality education was only for a select few, that imparting knowledge was relatively unimportant, and that the public schools could solve any social or political problem.

While Ravitch identifies several educators who challenged these wrong-headed ideas, their influence likely would have been much greater had parents possessed school choice options when the public schools began to dumb down their offerings.

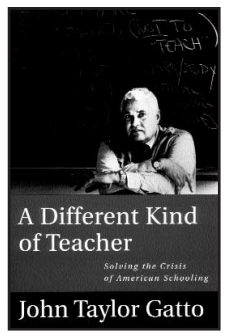
WHAT'S WRONG WITH PUBLIC SCHOOLS?

Myron Lieberman, *The Teacher Unions*
San Francisco, CA: Encounter Books, 2000

According to teacher union officials, the major problem facing U.S. public schools is a lack of money, which in turn is blamed for poor teacher pay, dilapidated school buildings, class sizes that are too large, and too many underqualified teachers.

But lifetime teacher union member and education policy expert Myron Lieberman disagrees and here presents a convincing case that the teacher unions themselves are the major roadblock to improving our public schools.

Lieberman details how the National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers, with over three million members and national revenues of over $1 billion a year, use their power to advance their own interests, block reforms, and maintain the status quo.



John Taylor Gatto, *A Different Kind of Teacher: Solving the Crisis of American Schooling*
Berkeley, CA: Berkeley Hill Books, 2001

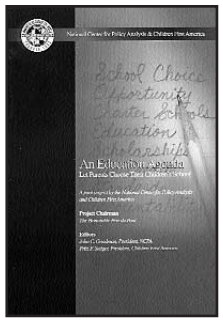
This book is a collection of 16 key essays and talks by Gatto.

One essay is particularly apropos as state and federal officials debate what to teach in the nation's public schools. In that chapter, Gatto lists what parents expect elite private boarding schools to teach their children:

- self-discipline;
- good manners;
- a public sense of decorum;
- leadership;
- sound intellectual knowledge;
- a common core of western culture for a shared set of values; and
- an appreciation for the natural world.

Wealthy parents expect schools to teach their children to adapt naturally to any social setting and to move freely through the economic system. "But don't we all want this?" asks Gatto.

SCHOOL CHOICE

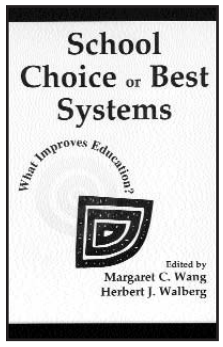


An Education Agenda: Let Parents Choose Their Children's School
National Center for Policy Analysis and Children First America, 2001

This 174-page book contains essays by almost two dozen of the nation's leading school choice authorities who address why choice is needed, what progress has been made, and what remains to be done. They examine what policies are working and what can be done to multiply the successes. This is a good book for people who are beginning to tune into the choice debate and want to get up to speed on the issues quickly.

Daniel McGroarty, *Trinnietta Gets a Chance: Six Families and Their School Choice Experiment*
Washington, DC: The Heritage Foundation, 2001

Rather than presenting parental choice in education as a multi-parameter policy option, McGroarty uses this book to show what existing school choice programs mean to real people, profiling six families who were desperate to find an alternative to the public schools for their children. Now, because of the voucher programs in Milwaukee, Cleveland, and San Antonio, their children are meeting educational success.



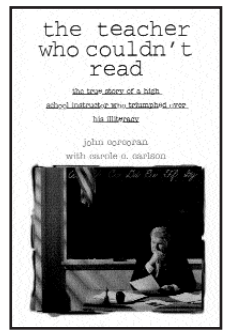
Herbert J. Walberg and Margaret C. Wang, *School Choice or Best Systems: What Improves Education?*
Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., 2001

This book pits choice advocates against people from the education establishment who believe they have made breakthroughs in helping all children. All the chapters, particularly the school choice chapters by Paul Peterson and Terry Moe, are evidence-based.

Nina Shokraii Rees, *School Choice 2000: What's Happening in the States*
Washington, DC: The Heritage Foundation, 2001

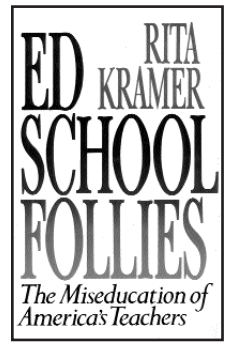
Perhaps a 230-page bound report does not qualify as a book, but this Heritage Foundation publication is an indispensable companion for anyone who needs specific, up-to-date state-level information on school choice. For each state, the report profiles K-12 student demographics, academic performance, educational expenditures, recent school choice legislation, homeschooling laws, and contact information for state organizations that support parental choice in education.

TEACHERS AND TEACHING


the teacher who couldn't read
the true story of a high school instructor who triumphed over his illiteracy
john corcoran
with carole o. carlson

John Corcoran, *The Teacher Who Couldn't Read*
Colorado Springs, CO: Focus on the Family, 1994

After reading this book, it's difficult to have any faith at all in the quality of college education courses, teacher certification, high school employment screening, and on-the-job performance assessment. That's because, in John Corcoran's case, every one of those processes failed to catch the fact that he was illiterate. He couldn't read in elementary school, couldn't read when he was awarded a high school diploma, was still illiterate when awarded a degree in education from Texas Western College in 1961, and still couldn't read a word after a 17-year career as a high school teacher and coach in California. He finally learned to read in 1986.



Rita Kramer, *Ed School Follies: The Miseducation of America's Teachers*
New York, NY: The Free Press, 1991; reissued as a paperback from iuniverse.com.

If it's difficult to believe what Diane Ravitch and John Taylor Gatto say about the anti-intellectualism prevalent in the public schools, Rita Kramer's book will dispel those doubts.

Kramer spent a year looking at what goes into the training of public school teachers at 15 schools of education across the country. What she found was that the teachers of teachers "almost nowhere" emphasized the measurable learning of real knowledge—a fact that ceased to surprise her when it became clear that the goal of schooling is not instructional or intellectual but political.

"The school is to be remade into a republic of feelings—as distinct from a republic of learning—where everyone can feel he deserves an A," she concludes gloomily.

Conspicuously absent from the training was any knowledge of the American Republic or any appreciation of the nation's common culture and the institutions from which it derives. After television, she concluded, "our schools of education are the greatest contributors to the 'dumbing down' of America."

HOMESCHOOLING

Marsha Ransom, *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Homeschooling*
Bryson City, NC: Alpha Books, 2001

Ransom's book is a very practical guide to home educating children of different ages and needs. She provides a comprehensive guide to homeschooling resources, from curricula to cyber schools, from study programs to support organizations. While designed with the new homeschooler in mind, this book is likely to serve as a comprehensive resource for veteran home educators, too.

Jessie Wise and Susan Wise Bauer, *The Well-Trained Mind: A Guide to Classical Education at Home*
New York, NY: W.W. Norton, 1999

Mother and daughter Jessie Wise and Susan Wise Bauer have assembled a comprehensive handbook on how parents can prepare their child to read, write, calculate, think, and understand by providing the child with an academically rigorous classical education at home.

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Education Vouchers in Developing Countries

When public schools have insufficient capacity, vouchers make it possible for poor families to enroll their children in private schools

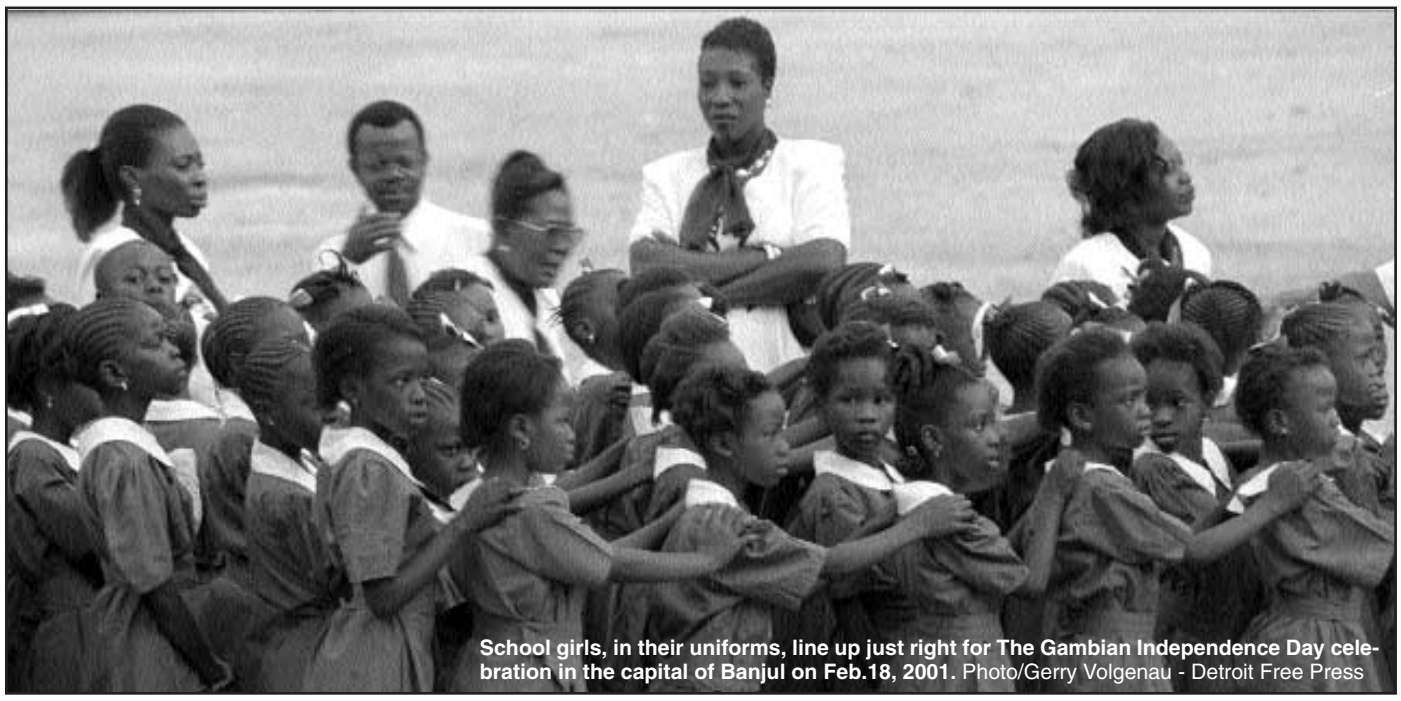
BY HARRY ANTHONY PATRINOS

School vouchers and targeted scholarship programs in the U.S. generally are used to help low-income families transfer their children from inadequate public schools to more acceptable private schools. In developing countries, these same tools are often used to help poor families invest in schooling when the capacity of public schools isn't adequate to meet demand.

For example, the number of seats available in public educational institutions in Côte d'Ivoire, Africa's Ivory Coast, is insufficient to meet student demand. To bridge some of the supply gap, the government has introduced a program of sponsoring needy students to attend private institutions. Private schools receive a payment for each sponsored student placed at their institution. In 1997, the government paid out some $103 million to sponsor over 162,000 students in private primary and secondary schools.

In The Gambia, the government is introducing a scholarship program for girls in the country's upper basic and secondary schools. In the most deprived regions of The Gambia, full scholarships for tuition, books, and examination fees will be awarded to one-third of the girls in schools with low enrollment. In less-deprived regions, full scholarships for tuition and examination fees will be awarded to 10 percent of the girls who are excelling in science, mathematics, and technology.

Colombia's national secondary school voucher program, established in 1991, was designed to offer municipalities a short-term, cost-effective, and efficient option to expand access to secondary schooling by low-income students. With vouchers, the students are able to attend private secondary schools that have excess classroom capacity.



School girls, in their uniforms, line up just right for The Gambian Independence Day celebration in the capital of Banjul on Feb.18, 2001. Photo/Gerry Volgenau - Detroit Free Press

"In 1997, the government [of Côte d'Ivoire, Africa's Ivory Coast] paid out some $103 million to sponsor over 162,000 students in private primary and secondary schools."

For more information…

WWW Visit the global education investment information facility at **www.worldbank.org/edinvest**.

Harry Anthony Patrinos is senior education economist with the World Bank in Washington, DC. He specializes in the economics of education and has published widely in this field. He is the founder of EdInvest, the global education investment information facility, which has a Web site at ***www.worldbank.org/edinvest****. His email address is Hpatrinos@worldbank.org. The views expressed here are those of the author and should not be attributed to the World Bank Group.*

VOUCHERS AND VOUCHER-LIKE SCHEMES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

COUNTRY	MECHANISM
Bangladesh	Stipends for girls to attend public or private schools
Belize	Government partnerships with churches to share costs of schooling
Bolivia	Private management of public schools by church-based organization
Brazil	Matching grants; capitation grants; and scholarships for poor students
Botswana	Matching-grant schemes
Chad	Community financing
Chile	Voucher system for poor students; capitation grants for all students
China	Matching-grant programs; targeted bursary for poor and minority children
Colombia	Targeted voucher system
Côte d'Ivoire	Government sponsorship of students at private institutions
Dominican Republic	Assistance to private schools serving low-income students
El Salvador	School choice for poor children
The Gambia	Targeted scholarships; capitation grants for all students
Guatemala	Targeted stipends for girls in 13 communities
Ghana	Matching-grant programs
India	Matching-grant programs and numerous incentives
Indonesia	Targeted scholarships for junior secondary school students
Jamaica	Student loans
Kenya	Voucher for informal sector workers to take courses that upgrade skills
Lesotho	Government partnership with churches to share costs of schooling
Mauritius	Matching-grant programs
Mexico	Targeted bursary for poor and indigenous populations
Myanmar	Community-sponsored schools
Morocco	Scholarships for rural girls
Mozambique	Scholarships for rural girls
Pakistan	Community scholarships; subsidies to private schools serving rural girls
Senegal	Scholarships for students to attend private and public schools in Dakar
Tanzania	Matching-grant programs; targeted scholarships for secondary school girls
Thailand	Bicycles for poor students to get to school in rural areas
Zimbabwe	Per-capita grants

Source: Patrinos, H.A., "Market Forces in Education," *European Journal of Education* 35(1):61-80 (2000)
http://www.worldbank.org/edinvest/Market_HP.html

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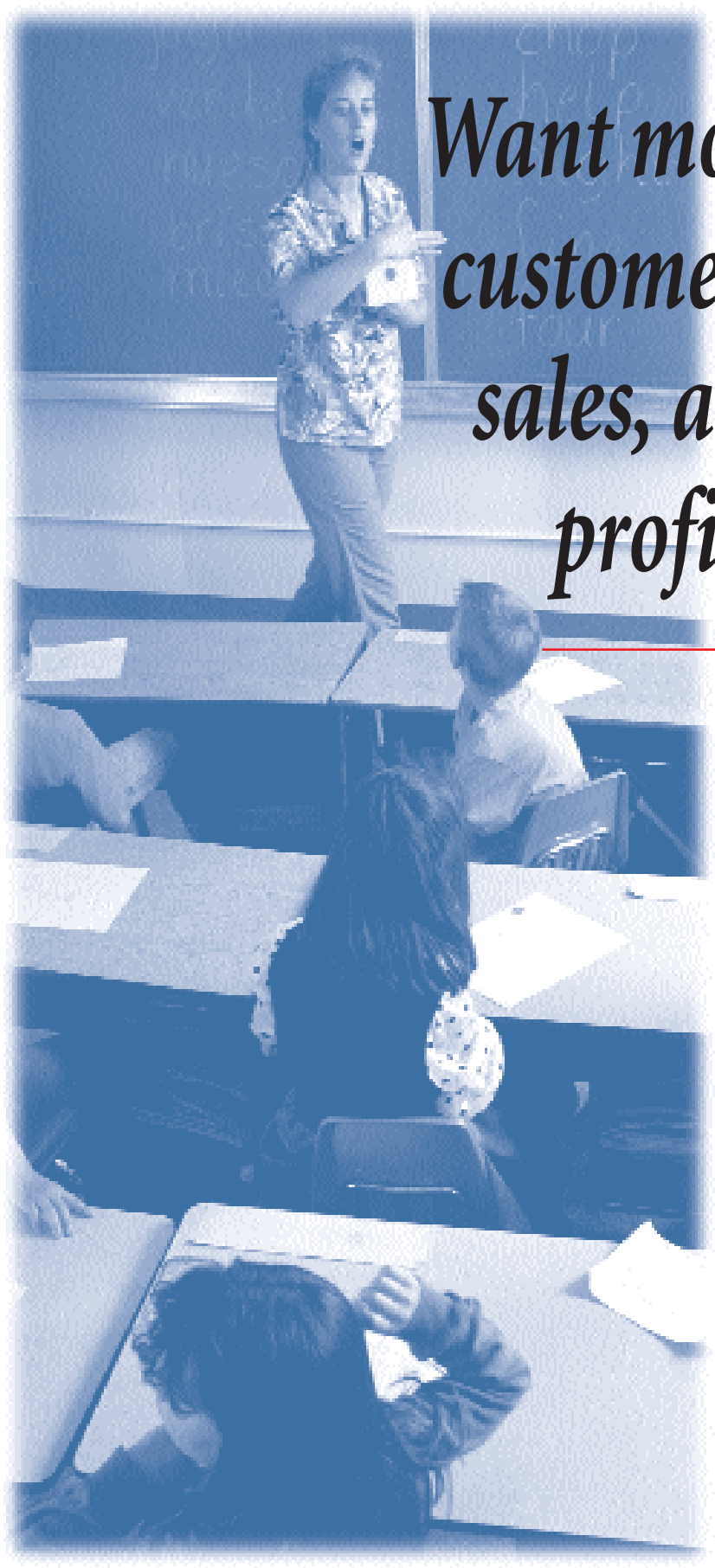

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